

NOVEMBER 20, 1943

# AMERICA

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## LABOR NEEDS MORE DEMOCRACY IN UNIONS

Benjamin L. Masse

## RED TACTICS IN HARLEM

Vincent Baker

## MICHAEL IN CHURCH

J. Paul Wagner

## HATE AND ANTI-HATE

John LaFarge

## COSTA RICA'S CODE OF INDUSTRIAL PEACE

W. Eugene Shiels

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A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

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NUMBER 7

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# AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

NOVEMBER 20, 1943

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## WHO'S WHO

BENJAMIN L. MASSE, motivated by his strong belief in free collective bargaining and concern over what the postwar era may bring, admonishes labor unions and leaders to eliminate all undemocratic practices now. . . . W. EUGENE SHIELS presents the general character and salient points of the new labor code of Costa Rica—the first industrial relations code of laws ever to have been reviewed, and approved, by a Roman commission for fidelity to the Papal Encyclicals. Father Shiels, before joining the AMERICA staff, taught in the history department at Loyola University, Chicago. . . . J. PAUL WAGNER, resident of Cincinnati and father of other children more tractable than Michael, hopes to bring comfort to many companions in misery with his reflections on the advantages and disadvantages of taking garrulous youngsters to Mass. . . . JOHN LAFARGE, by way of counsel in these days of hate and anti-hate campaigns, proposes a simple test whereby genuine movements can be told from the spurious. Father LaFarge charges all Americans, and Catholics especially, to discriminate truly and follow real Christian principles. . . . VINCENT BAKER, a young Negro who has followed the various youth movements with a discriminating eye and mind, reviews Communist efforts and ruses to gain control of Negro youth in particular. His prophecy for the future course of American youth is a heartening adventure in optimism. . . . HAROLD C. GARDINER, Literary Editor, has been drawn by recent correspondence to review and clarify the principles on which he judges books, particularly modern fiction. This is the first and ground-clearing article of a series.

# COMMENT ON THE WEEK

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**Prelude to Peace.** While the Civil War still raged, Abraham Lincoln announced his final aim: "to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the struggle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." While the world war still rages, representatives of forty-four nations met in Washington to found an international organization to bind up not one nation's wounds but the wounds of all the world, to feed the widows and orphans of the world, to take this first and most heartening step to achieve a lasting peace among all nations. President Roosevelt was fully justified in declaring that this "shows that we mean business in a political and humanitarian sense." It is a gigantic task, a task, in the literal sense of the word, heartbreaking. One writer recently told us that "ten per cent of the 300,000,000 people of Europe are already doomed to die of starvation or of disease resulting from malnutrition." Famine is already rife in India. Disease is exacting its deadly toll. Food and clothing and shelter and medical care will be the first needs of liberated peoples. The task must be undertaken. It is a task too great for any one nation or any small group of nations, however powerful. As the conference begins its work, we pray that it may not be too great a task for this world gathering of experts. They need our good will and our prayers.

**And All Can Help.** Prayer is not enough. Many good people conclude their graces after meals with the phrase: "May God provide for the wants of others." It is a thoughtful prayer, a generous prayer and it encourages the thought that perhaps God may want to provide for some of them through us. There are many demands on our generosity at the present time, but the American people would respond if the Government should appeal for a special fund to help feed the starving nations of Europe. Make it a penny fund or a nickel or dime fund so that even children could contribute. Carry on the campaign for the duration of the war in homes and schools and churches and places of amusement. It would be a constant education to social responsibility, to charity, to thoughts that will ensure a lasting peace. And it would give everyone an opportunity to contribute in a very personal way to the peace of the world.

**Wage Demands.** As was to be expected, the success of John L. Lewis in winning a substantial wage increase for the United Mine Workers has let loose an avalanche of wage demands. At the closing session of the CIO Convention in Philadelphia, the delegates, stressing the rise in the cost of living, approved a resolution calling for modification of the "Little Steel" formula to permit wage increases.

Almost immediately, the United Steelworkers of America, the nation's second largest union, announced that it would open wage negotiations for its 900,000 members. Other CIO unions are expected to take similar action. In Washington, leaders of 1,100,000 non-operating railroad employes rejected a compromise in their protracted struggle for a wage increase and, with employer support, carried their fight to Congress over the head of Economic Stabilization Director Vinson. Meanwhile, to afford Government agencies a breathing spell and to halt temporarily labor's drive to break the "Little Steel" formula, Mr. Roosevelt hurriedly appointed a War Labor Board committee to make a special study of the rise in living costs. Labor leaders have consistently maintained that the cost of living index compiled by the Bureau of Labor Statistics does not honestly reflect actual living costs. While the President's gesture may stop the tide of wage demands temporarily, it cannot be expected to stem them or to roll them back. It was clear by the end of the week that the country had reached a crisis in its fight to escape inflation.

**Factory vs. Farm.** Last April, in a vigorous message to Congress, the President wrote:

Some groups have been urging increased prices for farmers on the ground that wage earners have unduly profited. Other groups have been urging increased wages on the ground that farmers have unduly profited. Any continuance of this conflict will not only cause inflation but will breed disunity at a time when unity is essential.

Well, the conflict continued all during the summer months and into the Fall. It is going on now in Washington where the President is pleading vainly with the Congress for authority to use subsidies to control the cost of food. It is the immediate reason for labor demands that the "Little Steel" formula be scrapped. Labor feels that the Congress has sabotaged the Administration's anti-inflation program by refusing to control agricultural prices and to impose taxes calculated to curb excessive profits and to distribute evenly the burdens of war. On the other hand, the powerful farm lobby in Washington talks of the lush wages of war workers and insists that city people are well able to pay higher prices for food. The truth, of course, is that only a small minority of city workers are receiving lush wages. Most of them, especially if they have families, are being cruelly squeezed between the rigid "Little Steel" formula and high food prices. Unless the Congress approves subsidies on selected foods, a general advance in wages is inevitable. With living costs what they are, workers like the non-operating railroad employes, whose average wage is 73.8 cents an hour, with a minimum of 46 cents, cannot be expected to make further sacrifices to save the country from inflation.

**Mexican Archbishop Speaks.** To assure critics once more that the Church in Mexico does not seek to influence politics in any way, the Archbishop of Mexico City, Most Rev. Luis Martinez, made plain the role of the Bishops under his charge. The Hierarchy, he pointed out, does not direct civic organizations and has no responsibility for their activities, even though their members be Catholics and thus are guided by Catholic doctrine in their program and their action. The Bishops, of course, have the duty to explain and inculcate Catholic doctrine and the norms of the Holy See for Catholic Action, when it is opportune, but always keeping entirely clear of every political party and its action in the political field. It can declare whether a civic organization conforms to those aforesaid norms, without, however, giving any approval by such declaration to the program of the group in question. Priests who give sacramental care to members of these groups must beware of undue intrusion into the civic activity of the organizations. And they must respect the freedom of Catholics to affiliate with whatever civic parties they deem proper to further their civic duties and civic interests. In this forthright declaration the delicate line between religion and politics is carefully drawn. The statement will do much to allay doubts as to the Church's stand on politics, and likewise to encourage sound participation in public life.

**Father McGucken.** American Catholic education lost a notable leader in the death at Chicago, on November 5, of Rev. William J. McGucken, S.J. His life covered the transition period wherein our schools developed from the purely undergraduate level to the complex organization of contemporary Catholic institutions of higher learning. In that transition he had a large part as an organizer within, and an effective representative among secular groups. His thorough training, expert knowledge and charming personality won the respect of educators generally. His three scholarly books and many articles bear the stamp of enduring excellence. When called to serve on committees of national standing, his presence was a guarantee of integrity, true Americanism and high scholastic ideals. In his own circle few men have done more to advance the quality of faculty training and of that intangible thing, faculty cooperation in university activity. His contributions to this Review were in character with his life. May he rest in peace.

**AMC and the Lateran Concordat.** The assurances of the Allied Military Government in Italy that the invader will scrupulously respect the religious views of the population, 99.6 per cent of whom are Catholics, has given occasion to a news release by Rev. Dr. Jerome D. Hannan, Associate Professor of Canon Law at the Catholic University of America. The question arises as to the status of the Concordat reached between the Vatican and Italy, specifically regarding ecclesiastical property and the marriage laws. The United States in its previous occupation of conquered territory has consis-

tently maintained respect for the existing internal or municipal law. The treaties with France in 1803, with Mexico in 1848, and with Spain in 1898, provided that the inhabitants of the territories ceded should be secure in their religious beliefs and in the title to their property. Under Spanish law in Puerto Rico and the Philippines, the Catholic Church was recognized as a juridic personality, with a legal status. A Philippine court declared as early as 1906 that the contention that the Catholic Church is not a corporation in those islands did not merit serious consideration, "as it was made with reference to an institution which antedates by almost a thousand years any other personality in Europe, and which existed 'when Grecian eloquence still flourished in Antioch, and when idols were still worshipped in the temple of Mecca.'" This view was sustained by the U. S. Supreme Court in at least two decisions. In view of the precedent, states Father Hannan, AMG's declaration was necessary only because the Italian people were naturally not too well informed of the proud record of the United States.

**Taxes and Charity.** A study released by the Golden Rule Foundation lays bare a strange anomaly in these days of soaring national income. Concomitant with its spiraling, contributions to churches, educational and charitable institutions have decreased as much as thirty-five per cent. This is largely due to the present set-up under the withholding tax. The "Current Tax Payment Act of 1943," enacted last June, requires that every employer, after deducting the employee's family exemptions, shall take out of the employee's pay twenty per cent of his wages or salary. But previous law provides that fifteen per cent of that wage is exempt from tax if given to incorporated charity organizations. In other words, in the present operation of the withholding tax, the employee is being taxed on a tax-exempt portion of his wages. To remedy this inequity, Congressman Carl Curtis, of Nebraska, will appear before the House Ways and Means Committee to introduce an amendment. This will provide that

upon request of an employee, made at the beginning of any taxable year, the employer shall, before withholding the tax . . . deduct from the amount of wages paid to such employee the average amount for each payroll period of the religious, educational, charitable and other contributions . . . which the employee certifies he will pay during the current year.

This means that the tax-exempt wages will not continue to be taxed at the source, as they are at present. If the law is passed, it will mean that would-be contributors will no longer be deterred because "taxes have eaten up all my income." This bill deserves support. Catholic groups have registered their approval. The Government must realize in practice, as it does grandly in theory, that not even the exigencies of war-taxation can be allowed to destroy charity and the support of religion.

**Reconversion.** On November 6, former Justice James F. Byrnes implemented a Presidential order by appointing Bernard M. Baruch to be head of a new postwar conversion unit in the Office of War

Mobilization. It will be Mr. Baruch's responsibility "to deal with war and postwar adjustment problems and to develop unified programs and policies to be pursued by the various agencies of government concerned." Mr. Byrnes emphasized that for the present the new unit would be concerned not with postwar problems but with adjustments in the production program necessitated by the new requirements of our war strategy. Congressional reaction to this move has so far been strangely quiet, although there is a great deal of work on reconversion in progress on Capitol Hill. The absence of criticism of this exercise of Executive initiative may perhaps be explained by the announced intention of the new unit to concentrate for the present on the war production program. After all, there are few men in the country, if any, better qualified than Mr. Baruch to deal with the problems of a war economy. As Chairman of the War Industries Board during World War I, he has behind him a rich and varied experience, and since he has been often called upon for advice during the present war, he is probably well acquainted with the production problems created by changing conditions on the war front. However, postwar planning is another question and, despite Mr. Baruch's great gifts, the Congress may be unwilling to permit the Executive Department to monopolize decisions which are bound to determine the shape of things for many years to come. Look for continuing developments in the reconversion picture. The new conversion unit in the Office of War Mobilization is by no means the final word on planning the transition to a peacetime economy.

**Children At Mass.** Every eleven years or so someone starts a learned inquiry as to whether little children should be allowed to attend Mass. A terrific case can be drawn up against the squalling baby—maybe in the midst of a jubilee sermon. Sanctity and reverence of private prayer are disturbed by the cool gaze of infants staring from the next pew. But the old Church, for a' that, has a queer way of her own with the world's new arrivals. She insists upon baptizing infants, a practice which was dreadfully upsetting in early centuries to persons who thought Baptism should be a reward for good behavior. In certain countries and rites, Confirmation is administered even to babies. And six- or seven-year olds receive in Holy Communion the Lord of Heaven Himself. Good will all around, and a little ingenuity in aiding troubled mothers, will remedy most baby difficulties in church. Various devices may help. In some prairie churches the architect has obligingly arranged for a Mother-and-Baby room with a large glass window opening on the sacristy. Best solution of all, however, is the celebrant's or preacher's own attitude. If he is inclined to encourage the bringing of babies to church, regardless of behavior, the congregation will readily take the cue. Anyhow, the adventures of Michael, told elsewhere in this issue, may encourage those who welcome the very young to the Father's house, and help change the views of those who now demur.

## UNDERSCORINGS

**ECCLESIA**, monthly journal of the Vatican Office of Information for War Prisoners, gives high praise to American treatment of Italian and German prisoners. The same issue reports that Japanese care of prisoners conforms to International Law.

► Vatican Radio, in giving statistics for the past year, noted that forty Bishops had died during the year, and that three new dioceses, all in South America, were created.

► Catholic Bishops in Germany, according to *Religious News Service*, sent a joint message to the Holy Father expressing regret over the November 5 bombing of Vatican City. They felicitated the Pope on being spared personal injury. The origin of the bombing has not yet been determined, but Vatican authorities have instituted a careful investigation and promise a protest in due time.

► Grand Rapids is host to its new Bishop, Most Rev. Francis J. Haas, whose consecration takes place on November 18. The diocese, city and State, together with a large number of notable churchmen, will participate in welcoming this distinguished new member of the Hierarchy.

► Good news came to Mexico when the Chamber of Deputies voted to give back the name of Villa de Guadalupe Hidalgo to the suburb of the capital within which lies Tepeyac Hill, the site of the vision of Our Lady of Guadalupe. "Our Lady of Guadalupe" is a sacred name all over Latin America.

► On the other hand, the municipal authorities in the city of Vera Cruz, forgetting the meaning of their city's name, have declared a recent Eucharistic procession an infringement of the law, "in compliance wherewith" they are now proceeding against the four Bishops who formed the center of the procession.

► A news item from the *Scottish Catholic Directory* records that there were 614,469 Catholics in Scotland in 1942.

► The entire English and Welsh Hierarchy, says N.C.W.C. *News Service*, assembled at Archbishop's House, Westminster, there to meet the Minister of Education for a long discussion on the forthcoming education bill. As the bill promises to provoke contention, an attempt was made to reach agreement before its introduction. No statement was issued on the results of the meeting.

► Very appropriately, the fortieth anniversary of Pope Pius X's famous *Motu Proprio* on Church Music was celebrated on September 7 at Blessed Sacrament Church, Sioux City, Iowa, by a Solemn High Mass in the presence of the Most Rev. Edmond Heelan, Bishop of Sioux City. The congregation sang the Common of the Mass and the Responses, and the Proper was rendered by a laymen's *Schola Cantorum* under the direction of the Rev. Dominic Lavan, O.S.B.

► In Brooklyn the Redemptorist parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help lists 2,254 men and women serving in the armed forces of the nation. Twenty-six have died in service. One-fourth of the Redemptorists in the United States are now Chaplains to the armed forces.

## THE NATION AT WAR

IN the week ending November 8, the Russians have made considerable progress in new directions. What had been their main effort—an advance towards the industrial center of Krivoi Rog—is not only stopped, but has been pushed back a few miles.

Instead of persisting where success seemed to be unlikely or difficult, the Russians shifted to the vicinity of Kiev, which has been right in the front line. The original attack here was as long ago as September 26, but never had any special success. On the 5th of this month, having made necessary secret preparations, a powerful attack broke through the German lines and entered Kiev.

The Russians have completed occupation of the Nogais steppes, which are just north of the Crimea. The Germans have retained two posts, technically known as bridgeheads, opposite the cities of Nikopol and Kherson, on the east bank of the Dnieper. In this area the Germans appear to have lost heavily.

The Germans are holding on to the Crimea, although the land connection is in Russian hands. This area is an important air and naval base, equally useful to either side. Two Russian offensives to recapture it are in progress. The first is against the narrow Perekop Isthmus on the north, and has so far failed. The second is a landing from the sea near Kerch at the east tip of the Crimea. This has gotten ashore, and fighting is in progress.

According to Stalin's speech of November 6, the Germans have increased the number of their divisions in Russia since summer from 179 to 240. It is not clear how they were able to do this. Increases during the same time have been reported of some five to ten divisions in France, of fifteen in Italy and of an undetermined number in the Balkans. Some of these "increases" may be due to propaganda, but the information from Russia, based on prisoners captured, should be accurate.

On inactive fronts, such as France, reports come mostly from secret agents. It takes time for these to arrive and, besides being liable to inaccuracy, they are often out of date when they are received. Making allowance for this, it seems that Germany has raised new troops since last winter, which are now arriving in line.

On November 5 an unidentified single plane dropped four bombs on Vatican City. This appears to have been intentional. It was dark, 8:00 P.M., but the plane flew low, and was seen to go back and forth before it dropped its bombs. The line on which the bombs were dropped appears to have been carefully selected. The Holy Father has started an investigation to determine what this plane was, and it is to be hoped he will find out who is responsible for this outrage.

The Allies in south Italy are advancing. Every day there has been a small but intense battle, which has pushed the line steadily northwards. So far no Italian troops are fighting on either side. The Badoglio Government is cooperating with the democracies, and perhaps in time its soldiers will be with the Allies.

COL. CONRAD H. LANZA

## WASHINGTON FRONT

WASHINGTON has just witnessed one of the most shameful degradations of newspaper reporting it has ever seen. I refer to the hearings on the proposed denial to the magazine *Esquire* of its second-class mailing privileges. During the two weeks that the hearings lasted, a dozen or more respectable citizens from around the country were called in and asked to give an opinion on eleven exhibits taken from the magazine. They were the Post Office's witnesses, it is true, but they were unanimous in condemning what they were shown. They were faced by a smart and tricky lawyer who often stooped to deceiving them by showing them pictures and jokes not in *Esquire* at all.

This was bad enough. But the Washington papers, in reporting the hearings, outdid themselves in ridiculing the witnesses, or in suppressing their most telling points. In the *Times Herald*, day after day, a reporter (in the news columns, of course) enjoyed himself thoroughly, poking fun at the supposedly blue-nosed persons who were so easily shocked. The Rev. Dr. Thomas Verner Moore, O.S.B., a noted psychiatrist and moralist, gave an impressive statement on obscenity, but even the more respectable papers ignored his points. *Esquire* may or not be guilty (this observer would not know) but what did take a terrible beating was the country's sense of decency, for undoubtedly the local stories were reflected in the news services' reports and in magazine articles everywhere.

While I am at it, I may as well mention another pet peeve, and that is the treatment received in the press, or a part of it, by Secretary Hull. Curiously, here the extreme nationalists and the extreme internationalists joined forces; but the former blamed his forwardness and the latter his backwardness in working for an organization of nations to make a just peace. It was not really Mr. Hull they were blaming, of course, for the President makes our foreign policy, but they dared not tackle him.

Moscow left a lot of people eating their words, and others, like *Fortune* in November, coming out after the event to blame Mr. Hull for not doing the very thing he did do. The revelation that he had been working on the Moscow agreements for fourteen months (which, after all, was known to quite a few in Washington) was that kind of cruel and unusual treatment which Mr. Hull has a way of inflicting on opponents who underestimate his silence and patience.

In this connection, in spite of the acclaim for the Moscow agreements and the 85-5 vote for the amended Connally Resolution, isolation is, I am informed, not dead in Washington or the country. The maneuvers of Senator Nye and others in Congress, in connection with some Washington correspondents, are a fair indication that, now that our foreign policy is fairly cleared up, it is not going to have a walk-over in the Senate. It is not forgotten that any future treaty which may be negotiated by the President can still be negatived by the vote in the Senate of a third plus one.

WILFRID PARSONS

# LABOR NEEDS MORE DEMOCRACY TO MEET THE PRESENT CRISIS

BENJAMIN L. MASSE

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THERE is good reason to feel concern over the lot of organized labor in the postwar world. During the past year, the growing power of Southern reactionaries and anti-union Republicans has been demonstrated in the Congress, notably in the passage of the Smith-Connally Bill. While wishful thinking may be exaggerating the anti-union sentiment in the armed services, there can be little doubt that organized labor is unpopular among the soldiers; and these tough-minded young men—10,000,000 of them—are going to have a great deal to say about postwar America to both labor and business. Sentiment among the civilian public, both in the rural regions and among white-collar city folk, is almost equally anti-labor. And of course the press, which reflects the attitude popular in business circles, would like to see the power of labor drastically reduced.

These are real threats to organized labor, and union leaders must take them into account.

But the greatest danger to the unions in the postwar world comes from within, not from without. To a large extent it is the weakness of labor which is the strength of its enemies. I am not thinking for the moment of the schism in labor's ranks, or of the relatively few racketeer-infested unions, or even of the dozen or so unions—almost all of them very small numerically—which have been captured by the Communist Party and are being exploited for foreign ideological goals.

Rather I refer to what might be called the decline of democracy in modern trade-union organization. This threat is the worst problem of all—and probably the most difficult to deal with. Yet unless it is solved, and in the not-too-distant future, this observer is inclined to be bearish on labor's postwar prospects.

Already rumblings in labor's ranks are audible, and you do not have to put your ear to the ground to hear them. It may be granted that some of this discontent, perhaps most of it, emanates from the raw recruits—if that is the proper word—who have flocked into war industry from kitchen and office and farm. These people have had no previous experience of industrial employment, no intimate knowledge of trade unionism—its spirit, its discipline, its loyalties, the part it has played in creating the favorable conditions under which they work. They know only that in order to obtain employment they have had to pay initiation fees and dues, and in many cases they do not like it.

But newcomers are not the only ones who are grumbling. Some of the veterans are re-examining their position and asking questions they never thought of asking before. How widespread this discontent is may be a question. Perhaps among older union men it is a negligible factor. But there can be no doubt that it exists.

What is the trouble?

Westbrook Pegler has given one answer which is widely accepted as the true one. Stripped to its essentials it is this: with the support of the Government, acting in a quasi-public capacity under the authority of the Wagner Act, labor leaders have conscripted millions of more or less unwilling workers, forced them into authoritarian, tax-producing unions and are there exploiting them for motives of personal power and financial gain.

Applied to the labor movement as a whole, not to certain notorious unions, that is not a picture of what is wrong, but a vicious caricature. But a caricature, it should be remembered, distorts reality: it does not deny it. Beneath Mr. Pegler's grotesquery, there is a substratum of disconcerting truth which the more intelligent labor leaders would be unwise to deny.

In some unions, of course, the decline of democratic procedure has been the unlovely result of conscious dictatorial pressure from above. This is well known to the public, especially to Mr. Pegler's public. Not nearly so well known, though, is the fact that even in progressive unions there exists a steady trend toward authoritarian rule.

For this development labor leaders are not primarily to blame, not even the ones who have not been displeased by the course events are taking and are certainly not swimming against the tide. Indeed, no one is to blame, unless it be the financiers who presented the country with its first billion-dollar corporation! For, in the last analysis, it is sheer bigness which is threatening democracy in the trade-union movement, just as it is bigness which is threatening democracy in business, agriculture and in government itself.

As the stockholders have to a great extent lost control of the corporations they own, as the voters have been removed a step farther from the legislative process by the expansion and multiplication of administrative agencies, so the luxuriant growth of bureaucracy in the unions has weakened the rank and file *vis-a-vis* their leaders. The process is inevitable. Wherever there is bigness, in govern-

ment, in labor unions, in business, there you will find bureaucracy. And we have not yet found the technique, despite the claims of Socialists, for wedging bureaucracy to democracy.

It must not be imagined, however, that the majority of the rank and file resent the bureaucratization of their unions. Many workers are no more interested in the administration of their unions than most stockholders are in the management of their corporations. Like the stockholders, they are concerned almost exclusively with results. As long as their leaders deliver the goods—higher wages, shorter hours, improved working conditions—they are as satisfied and uncritical as stockholders who receive regular dividends.

This general lack of democratic interest in the government of their union, this spirit of irresponsibility, has strengthened the trend toward bureaucratic and authoritarian control. Many labor leaders, imbued with the democratic ideals of unionism, have striven honestly to counteract the apathy of the rank and file, but their efforts to interest union members and to persuade them to attend meetings regularly have been no more successful than management's efforts to interest stockholders in their property. Until there is a rebirth, or in many instances a first growth, of "civic consciousness" among the rank and file, unions will continue to be what many of the large ones now are—streamlined, bureaucratic service agencies efficiently and honestly managed for workers by professional labor careerists.

Some sensitive people may be shocked by this picture of unionism. (Why are the same people so seldom shocked by the government of our great corporations, which are also, and to a greater extent, bureaucratically and dictatorially administered?) From the viewpoint of the material welfare of the rank and file, there is small reason to be disturbed by the growth of bureaucracy in trade-union administration. Like corporation executives, most labor leaders are sincerely devoted to the interests of those who pay their salaries. In general, they probably give much better service than the uninterested rank and file are entitled to. And in a number of cases they are animated by an enthusiasm for the cause of the workers and the good of the country, by an unselfishness and idealism which are truly admirable. Anyhow, if many labor leaders possess great power today, it is not because, generally speaking, they have wilfully grasped it. Circumstances have forced it on them.

But the point is they do have tremendous power, power based on control of union funds, publications, patronage and administrative machinery. If a union has a closed-shop or maintenance-of-membership contract, an unscrupulous leader has an irresistible means of exacting obedience and submission from the membership. In few large unions today would a minority have a sporting, democratic chance to become the majority and assume control of the union. (This is less true, of course, of locals than of nationals and internationals.)

Now, frequently enough, despite the apathy of the masses of workers, there are dissatisfied mi-

norities which would like to oust their leaders or change the policies of the union. Often, it is true, this dissatisfaction proceeds from envy or greed or selfish ambition. There are chronic "gripers" and self-seeking demagogues in every great organization. Nevertheless, under democratic procedure, even such people have the right to present their case and to try to win adherents. If this right is denied, it is hard to see how an earnest, well-intentioned minority can ever displace those in power, even when the officeholders are dishonest or incompetent.

In too many cases today, minorities are denied this basic democratic right. In a courageous article appearing in the Fall number of the *Antioch Review*, Will Herberg, research and educational director for the New York Dressmakers Union of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, writes as follows:

Members of unions, even progressive unions, are on occasion exposed to severe penalties for exercising rights, such as forming "parties," issuing leaflets, holding meetings, denouncing officials, that are specifically guaranteed under the law of the land. Even in democratic unions, the effective power of top officials is greater, their grip tighter, their tenure more secure, their conduct in office less open to public criticism and control, than is commonly the case in our Federal or State governments in normal times.

Mr. Herberg is no more interested than I am in weakening organized labor, especially today when organized anti-union forces are so active and when public sentiment, often through ignorance and misinformation, has turned against labor. If I bring the matter up at this time, it is because I have become convinced that for its own good, which is also the good of the country, labor must act immediately to protect the rights of the rank and file by sponsoring some form of public restriction on the power of labor leadership.

It may be objected, of course, that whatever the merits of this suggestion, this is not the time to propose it, much less to act on it. Labor is battling today with its back against the wall. In too many sections of the country, and among too many employers, unions have not yet "arrived." They have not yet been granted recognition as an integral, constructive part of the industrial and civic community. When you are under false indictment for various crimes, it is poor strategy to change your ordinary mode of life. The change may seem to be an admission of guilt.

The objection is forceful, but not conclusive. In labor's fight against reactionary forces, it needs public support. A proposal aimed at protecting the rights of the rank and file, *coming from labor itself*, would go a long way toward gaining that support. It would do more. It would tend to range the rank and file solidly back of labor leadership. It would ensure that, if there is to be a fight to the finish in the postwar world, labor would not enter the struggle with a potential fifth column of dissentents in its ranks. And best of all, a freely-given guarantee of democracy within labor would, at a single blow, deprive the opposition of some of its heaviest artillery.

# ECONOMIC DEMOCRACY IN COSTA RICA

W. EUGENE SHIELS

COSTA RICA, the progressive Republic in Central America, is the first country in the Western Hemisphere to write into its laws the Christian concept of Social Justice. By an act of August 26, 1943, this most democratic of American democracies put an official end to the "strife of the classes." The act, too, is working. It has teeth in it, and it is fitted exactly to the problem.

Many of the provisions of this new Code have been advanced by leaders of Labor and Industry in our country. The Institute of Public Affairs, held annually at the University of Virginia, has heard them proposed on occasion, as various statesmen and scholars went on record for a betterment of our affairs. The press has carried similar discussions from time to time. But it was left to our neighbor republic to make the leap from talk to deed. That rugged nucleus of American freedom had anticipated our own declaration of war against the Axis by a full eighteen hours on the fatal December 7, 1941, thus honoring its Inter-American agreement in the van of its sister republics. It now gives all others the lead in the critical question of our epoch.

The enactment of the new Code—*El Código de Trabajo* (The Code of Labor)—has even in so very brief a time produced a striking political effect in the country that mothered it. For the Communist Party, seeing its thunder completely stolen and its only remaining plea a plea for disorder, gave up its special platform and subscribed to the program of the Social Justice party called *Vanguardia*. *Vanguardia* itself backed the candidate of the rival party, that of the President, Señor Calderón García, who sponsored and signed this legislation. Hence in the national election this latter party, the National Republican Party, finds the entire electorate behind it as its presidential nominee, Teodoro Picado, goes to the polls.

Costa Rica struck frontally at the great problem of our times. Leo XIII had pointed out the absolute necessity of settling the social problem. While other nations were attempting to meet this crisis by various compromises or ideologies, this land of 600,000 souls, small in size but one of the best educated sections of the globe, managed to untangle the diverse claims of ownership, workmanship and consumer, and to draw up a model instrument of industrial relations.

The crucial political question can be stated quite simply. Democracies are ruled by the votes of their constituents. Most of their constituents are found among the working classes, and their votes count equally with all others. Constitutional governments cannot hope to continue unless their economies

reflect, not a machine run by business for the sake of business—the Manchester notion of a century ago—or one run by Labor for the sake of Labor, but a harmony between the just claims of all parties who work for a living. Lacking this harmony, the vote is dangerous and may easily bring in a dictatorship of either party, a thing desired by no sensible man. The remedy lies in a frank facing of the fact, and a willingness to make the State the guardian of the rights of all rather than the totalitarian master of its subjects.

How does Costa Rica meet this need? The *Código de Trabajo* lays down the rights and duties of all parties to the economic process. It provides guarantees of these rights and duties through an enforcement and a separate system of Labor Courts whose operation is at once rapid, straightforward and sovereign over all the clamor of groups in every sector of the national economy. Ever in mind is the goal of Economic Democracy, the step beyond political equality and social harmony by which the right of everyone to work, to own, to improve his lot and to find security is recognized and upheld.

In its 614 Titles the Code takes up in turn the following divisions: a) General Principles; b) Contracts and Agreements of Labor; c) Hours of Work, Days of Rest and Salaries; d) Protection of Workers while at work; e) Social Organizations; f) Collective Conflicts in Socio-Economic Matters; g) Special Tribunals of Labor; h) Servants of the State and of its Institutions; i) Administration of Labor Organizations; j) Prescriptions, Sanctions and Responsibilities. A final division ties up this code with the general law of Costa Rica on Social Justice—in matters such as benefits connected with Social Security, mentioned in Title 96—and with other pertinent legislation.

Appended to the Code, as printed, are three documents illustrative of the progress of the Code through Congress. These papers reveal the interesting fact that the Code was submitted to a panel of Roman experts in the social doctrine of Leo XIII and Pius XI, and that Pope Pius XII gave it his explicit approval.

Clearly, the law is too lengthy for detailed exposition here. It is to be hoped that the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, or some like official, will have it translated into English and circulated among our industrialists, labor leaders and men of government. But a rapid overview of its provisions may offer some idea of what it aims to do.

The dominant note is that no individual or group owns Costa Rica. Everyone is under the law, and the law is not only of the people and by the people but for the people. The interests of groups may differ. There will always be clashes of opinion and attempts at the use of force. But the whole people will give its decision through its government and its appropriate channels of expression.

The central theme of the Code is the organic unity of economic interests in Costa Rica. Capital and Labor may not carry on a warfare, because they are not two naturally opposing classes. They are, moreover, not the only two parts of the one

national society. All the people have a vital concern in the producers and distributors of commodities.

Titles 7 and 8 recognize that everyone has the right to do business, to work and to make a decent living so that he may live decently. In Title 262, we find it ordained that, for the common good, both Business Syndicates and Labor Syndicates must incorporate. By Title 274, their papers of incorporation must show statements of assets, liabilities, schedules of payments, methods of administration, by-laws and lists of officers. All important decisions on industrial relations must be transmitted to the official Council of Labor and Social Revision.

Neither owners—nor their agents—nor Labor may dodge responsibility for their actions. In every case the law favors the weak, so far as law rightfully can, but there is no more room for mass intimidation, violence or crime than for improper use of ownership or the power of management. Individual rights, whether of human dignity or of property, are upheld wherever they lie. However, no rights, real or imagined, may prevail over the good of the body politic.

In the case of Labor Unions or Syndicates, all members of a Union are bound to abide by the majority decision so long as they are members, and thus they must strike if a legal strike is ordered. On the other hand, no one may be forced either to enter a Union or to remain in it. Yet while they enjoy membership they owe support, loyalty and trust, and must act with the Union in its proper decisions.

Any Labor contract that violates the Code is null and void, whether it favor owner or worker. A defective contract is interpreted in favor of Labor, and the deficiency is imputed to the owner. But neither owner nor worker may arbitrarily terminate his Labor contract before due time; penalty for this breach of contract is a severe fine and loss of Social Security rights (Title 31). And copies of all Labor contracts must be deposited with official agencies.

No contract may ordinarily call for more than forty-eight hours a week, nor more than eight a day or six at night, in factory work. In agriculture and herding, fixed hours and vacations are more elastic. A person who must travel more than ten kilometers—six miles—to work gets full travel pay. Contracts of women and minors are more strictly limited in point of hours and environment of work. If one-third of the workers belong to a Syndicate (nothing is said for or against the Closed Shop) and ask for a collective agreement to improve working conditions, the owner must hear their petition. And if within thirty days no agreement is reached, either party can bring suit in the Court of Labor to settle the case (Title 56). The owner may not force the workmen to buy in any store, to quit their Union, to vote for any party or to modify their religious views. Minimum wages are fixed by law and reviewed at stated times by special commissions.

Workmen are obliged to respect the proper

rights and directive authority of the owner of an enterprise. They may not slow down, stop or abandon work, do political canvassing during work hours or oppose in any way the democratic institutions of the country. A workman may quit for well-defined reasons; if he quits otherwise, he pays a large fine and loses his rights to various social benefits. Owners may discharge workers, but only for shoddy work, absenteeism, personal attack, injuring the morale of the working force or damaging the property of the industry. If worker or owner appeal such a case to a Court of Labor and lose the verdict, he is *ipso facto* fined.

In this connection there is a complete system of Labor Courts entirely separate from the general judicial set-up. Titles 379-577 explain the system, the steps through conciliation, arbitration and trial, the Superior Court of Labor, the qualifications of judges, the processes and competence of these Courts in their special sphere.

Vacations with pay for at least two weeks annually are mandatory. Expectant mothers receive a month with pay both before and after childbirth. Employers of more than thirty women must maintain a free day-nursery. Employers must insure their workers against accident, in the Banco Nacional de Seguridad; otherwise they must pay medical costs and funeral expenses in case harm arises through sickness or accident due to working conditions. Finally, the owner deducts and pays the workman's dues to his Cooperatives, those units of Costa Rican life that do much to balance the national economy.

Regarding the operation of Unions, Labor Syndicates may engage only in activity of a socio-economic nature. They must act democratically, voting by secret ballot, person by person, and only after free and open discussion of points at issue. Their assets are not taxable, their corporate acts punishable only by fine; but in cases involving infringement of property or personal rights, their directors are held responsible under the criminal code.

Most interesting is the procedure in strikes and shutdowns. "The right of the owners to shut down, and of the workers to strike, are equally inalienable" (Title 382). Both strikes and shutdowns may be legal or illegal. A legal strike is defined as a "temporary abandoning of work in an enterprise, establishment or business, agreed to and executed peacefully by a group of three or more workers, with the exclusive intention of bettering or defending their common economic and social interests" (Title 364). Illegal strikes and shutdowns are penalized by fines.

For a strike to be legal, at least sixty per cent of those working in the enterprise must vote the strike, and this after open debate and secret vote (Titles 264, 366). Sympathy strikes are implicitly banned. The strike must be confined strictly to cessation of work; acts of violence or coercion against persons or property fall under the criminal code.

In the public services no strikes are legal; they are held to be against the common good. Nor may

agricultural workers strike, for the same reason. Their complaints are handled like those of government employees. This is also true of herders, forest workers, transport workers while in transit, and those employed in clinics, hospitals, social and relief work. The national executive is empowered in time of distress to designate any other areas as of public interest.

When a conflict arises, the parties must first meet personally through committees. If that fails to remedy the cause, a process of conciliation is ordered. Should arbitration be agreed upon, its conclusions bind. Failing agreement, a twenty-day period is allowed the workers to post notice of a strike. When a strike is concluded, the owner may not modify the contract of Labor to the detriment of the workers. Nor may he discharge them, seeing that during a strike the contract is held to be merely in suspension, not dissolved.

The aim of this Code is freedom in a productive economy. There are no tyrants under the system. The powers of ownership, and of collective bargaining, are held in check just as their respective rights are guaranteed. And in a country which has the outstanding banking practice of Central America, the best credit, the most alert citizenry, the finest record for peace and sound political life, the people quite reasonably hope for success in this new venture in economic democracy.

## MICHAEL (VERY FOUR) GOES TO CHURCH

J. PAUL WAGNER



SUNDAY after Sunday we must make the big decision. Shall we take Michael to Mass? Now a visit to church or attendance at Mass is not a punishment; rather, Michael considers it a privilege. If he has been particularly obedient and lovable he is allowed to accompany one or the other of his parents. If not, he must stay at home. So the problem is solved.

Four years of mischief and mishap are Michael's history. He is a sturdy little towhead with incredibly long-lashed, brown eyes; his classical perfection of feature is usually marred by a scar or bruise, even upon two occasions by the decoration known as "a shiner." When he is devout he looks like one of Murillo's cherubs. Most of the time he does not.

When he goes to church, a whole new set of complications confronts us and entertains the parishioners. Only one of his parents can accompany him (although both should), because the other has to remain at home to watch the baby.

Michael's big brother, just past the first grade,

never burdened his elders with any such trials and tribulations. Big Brother wanted to go to Mass and he went. Family etiquette and necessity required Mother or Daddy to go to the early Mass and then to stay at home with infant Michael, while the other went to Mass with Michael's brother.

A better pattern could not have been set for Baby Michael to follow. Big Brother was a good little boy who could be depended upon to thumb the pages of his prayer book and rearrange the holy pictures when he became tired of watching the ceremony at the Altar, and the people in church. He would even sit still through the sermons, solemnly, though often sleepily.

Now Michael can never be depended upon for any consistent action. Yet he is so heartbroken when he is not allowed to go to church and he is so edifying when he is, that it is hard to refuse him.

One Sunday he was in a volatile mood, and he was warned: "People don't talk in Church."

All went quietly from then on, until the priest started to read the announcements. Then a clear four-year-old treble carrying all over the congregation challenged: "He's talking. Why can't I?"

Another Sunday, during a long Gospel, he was having a hard time fixing his holy pictures the way he wanted, when one slipped out of his reach onto the pew in front of him. In spite of Michael, or sometimes because of him, we faithfully follow the Missal during Mass. So we did not notice his struggle to reach his holy picture. Not, that is, until he climbed astride the pew and could not get forward or backward. There he was stuck, legs and arms swimming in the air. To emphasize our embarrassment the lady in the front pew, suddenly aware of the commotion, turned and made a hasty grab to protect her pocketbook from she did not know what kind of petty thievery. She glared at us, as though we were amateur Fagins.

For a long time he assumed that people who said the Rosary during Mass, dangling the beads and banging them against the pew, were making efforts to amuse him. He would always try to show his appreciation by making grabs at the rattling Rosary.

Usually it is an important act to put his two pennies in the collection box. One Sunday he ignored the box and all nudges. After Mass he was asked why he kept his pennies. He answered: "Oh, the man had a whole lot of money in there already. He didn't need my pennies."

Another Sunday, he saw a pal of his own age. Despite all efforts to repress him, he kept trying to attract his friend's attention. So, at the *Credo*, he just crawled out of the pew, crossed the middle aisle to where his pal stood, and said for the benefit of the whole church: "Hi, Poochey!"

Sometimes at the Consecration or Communion he wants an explanation of the Holy Eucharist. At other times a statue or picture intrigues him and he asks questions. Long ago the memorial and commemorative cards had to be removed from his prayer book, because of the inopportune questions they inspired.

He likes to sing and has a good little ear for

melody, and a sense of rhythm. Even though the service lasts longer, he enjoys High Mass more than Low. He hums along with the choir, without distracting anyone, unless he decides to keep time by kicking the kneeling-bench.

Each Sunday brings its own problems at Mass. One occasion, however, that almost proved disastrous for his humbled parent, occurred when Michael was not taken to Mass. He had been exceptionally obedient and naturally expected his usual reward. But baby had needed some special care and had caused a delay. Moreover, the effects of Michael's Saturday night bath had already suffered the ravages of time. We promised him a substitute; but Michael still thought his just reward had been denied.

So with a kiss and a promise, his parent hurried to Mass. All went well until the *Kyrie Eleison*, when a mild staccato of footsteps kept time with the choir. A tousled towhead was coming down the center aisle searching each pew. His scuffed shoes and playsuit were no impediment. Certainly, Michael was not going to be denied this day. If his parents wouldn't take him, he would go himself.

The triumphant grin on his face offset his unexpected appearance; even though for a second Michael's parent speculated: "I could pretend I don't know him." Michael clambered into the pew and remained an angel with a dirty face all through that Mass.

With all these distractions of which he is often the involuntary cause, one might wonder if his parents would be wiser if they left him at home—at least until he reaches the age of more discretion. Yet when he prays—and he does—he prays so sincerely that even the majestic seraphim must be awed. The times that he is, in his own way, talking with Jesus, more than compensate for the times when one would like to remind critics of the late Father Vincent McNabb's warning: "For God's sake, don't qualify for spinsterhood by objecting to children in Church!"

The patient nun, who in a moment of desperation wails that parents pass on their pets without introducing them to that great teacher, Experience, cannot point to Michael. Our pride and joy has been put through the decorous method of attending Mass. But even a saint's patience can come to an end. And Michael's parents are not saints.

So, by experience, we have learned that the Guider of our ways and the Lover of all good things is often more favorable towards the petitions of Michael and his big brother than He is to ours. We conclude that only He Who can look into the hearts of all can really understand what sincere questioning and seeking love are behind Michael's seeming irreverences and outspoken remarks in His House.

Certainly Michael has the stamp of approval etched on him; he was blessed with Jesus' own benediction. The Lover of all children showed us the way when He rebuked the overly solicitous disciples with: "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

## HATE AND ANTI-HATE

JOHN LaFARGE

ALONG with a few hundred thousand other citizens, I received recently a request to sign a pledge, entitled "Declaration of War on Hatemongers." The idea, as professed, is to give "cohesion and movement and direction and a fighting aim to the counterfront so needed to fight the angry Fascist storm of hate."

The pledge is to be filled in and sent "to your priest, your clergyman, your rabbi or a responsible public official." Wording of the pledge is such that any person will naturally subscribe to it who is opposed to racial intolerance or religious bigotry.

From the standpoint of pure method it is a question whether this procedure will not simply confirm the antagonisms which it professes to combat. It might work to give "cohesion and movement" to a *counter-counterfront* and so strengthen the "angry storm of hate."

However, there is a much more important consideration.

Communists, Nazis, Fascists and their various types of fellow travelers all make use in one form or another of the anti-hate motif as a way of popularizing their respective ideologies. It is an encouraging symptom in itself that the warfare against hate does carry such a popular appeal, even though the appeal may permit itself to be misused.

An appeal to dread of hate strikes a vibrant, powerful chord, whether that appeal originates from the depth of love or from the counsels of malice. The mass of normal people, for the most part, are fearful of hate. The war's development has revealed to the whole world hate's potentialities for evil and destruction. We are in terror not so much of the bombs and bombing planes as we are of the hate of those who control them. Again, the consciousness of what it means to be surrounded by a universe of hate and to be threatened by the retribution which such a universe of hate engenders, is a nightmare already oppressing midnight hours of the Axis aggressors. We ourselves will become uneasy if we discover that, through our own racial or national policies abroad, we are building up enemies where we imagined we had friends.

Another circumstance adds validity to the anti-hate propaganda. We not only fear hate, but we fear to wear the reputation of hate. None of the ideologies today, at least for purposes of widespread popular propaganda, wishes to be stigmatized as advocating hate, however its acts may belie the profession. Professor Sorokin may appear and explain to us that this is part of the cycle by which revolutions ultimately liquidate themselves: they end up by advocating the very things which they originally set out to destroy. But I venture to say this phenomenon means more than even that. It is not wholly wild to conjecture that this general fear

of even the *reputation* of hatefulness may be the remote beginning of a worldwide recognition that love is the only adequate motivation for justice. It is a backhanded tribute to the power of love. Ultimately love is destined to reveal itself as the most dynamic element on earth. Such a development is not a mere swing to full circle in the revolutionary trend. It is part of the direction which God gives to human affairs. And in His Providence the first beginnings of great changes are apt to be terrifying.

But we are practically concerned with the question of how we can combat hate so as not to create more hate. How can we distinguish a genuine battle against hate from the counterfeit which the ideologies utilize?

There are many answers to this question, for there are many ways of creating counterfeits. One simple test, however, will suffice for most purposes—at least until Screwtape, the Abysmal Uncle, has added a few more quirks to his devious tactics. Let us simply ask, when approached on this matter, whether the campaign against hate is universal or is limited to only certain peoples or minorities. That is an easy question to propound, but it is difficult to answer in full sincerely, since only a heart conformed to the Sacred Heart of the Redeemer is likely to be completely all-embracing in its sympathies. It is so easy to distinguish, to equivocate and to avoid conclusions that demand personal sacrifice and the overcoming of deep-lying personal prejudices and repugnances. It is so easy to be general, so painful to be specific. Yet the answer must be given, and now is the time for it, while emergencies are approaching, but we are not yet in their grip.

We are rightly shocked when we hear Racism or anti-Semitism denounced by certain groups who are indifferent to insults against our most sacred convictions, doctrinal and moral, as Catholics. We agree instantly with the preaching of an anti-hate campaign on behalf of Catholics. It is well we should; otherwise we should be disloyal and untrue to our Faith. But if we *mean* our anti-hate, if we mean to conquer hate and hate propaganda in all and in any form, we must grieve over and must protest against the beating of Jewish boys in urban Catholic neighborhoods. We cannot expect to blow hot for one and cold for another. Since these beatings are reported, with details of persons and circumstances, it would seem to be an elementary duty to inquire into the actual facts.

The demon that such manifestations of group hatred release in our midst respects no race, color or religion; and he is ready to serve any master who will feed his insatiable appetite.

It is easy enough to say "I am ready to love all men," in a vague, general way. But the test of our love's universality comes when we are willing to make the same allowances for all men, and treat each according to his individual merits and as a human being, judging him for better or worse, as he may act.

It is these qualifications and allowances that create most of the trouble. We make them easily for

our own personal selves. As Saint Bernard remarked, we absolve ourselves all day long. We have little difficulty in making them for those we naturally love and understand, with whom we are kin by blood, association or training.

I find it easy, for instance, to see how a fine American boy, under certain terrible provocations, can go practically berserk and commit cruelties he would not think of under normal conditions, and yet remain fundamentally a fine American boy. I can make this allowance because I can put myself imaginatively in his place, and I know how things would strike him and how they would doubtless arouse me to anger if I experienced them. But it is not easy to make these same allowances, to distinguish between the sinner and the sin, to extend the same essential love with complete impartiality to the murderer and his victim, in the case of persons whose experiences and background are entirely different from my own, whose emotions are not my emotions, whose fears are not my fears. It is not easy to follow this course while maintaining an absolute, complete condemnation of the sin and the crime, even while making reasonable allowance for the factors in training and environment which have encouraged these criminal tendencies. Yet this is precisely what we have to do if our own condemnation of hate is of genuine gold, and not just an alloy of egotism, timidity and group selfishness.

We can blame ourselves if we are gullible and let ourselves be taken in by fictitious Popular-Front anti-hate campaigns, whose only aim seems to be to stir up worse conflict than that which they profess to remedy. And it is a similar folly to treat lightly the genuine fears, the deep-seated anxieties that beset our fellow citizens, of whatever racial or national origin. It is folly to refrain from genuine, *bona fide* campaigns against all hatred, racial, religious or national, simply because certain abuses are carried on under this pretext. And many who commit themselves to unreasonable, fantastic plans of action, do so because of genuine fears.

As God-fearing Christian people, we hold it entirely in our power to establish criteria for a genuine anti-hate policy. Reason and Faith alike provide us with that positive philosophy of human rights which enables us to look below the surface and see man as God has created him. Furthermore, the universal outlook of our Catholic Faith establishes those standards of all-embracing love which prevent our anti-hate policies from becoming a mere expression of enmity to one group under the guise of friendship for another.

Such a policy cannot be worked out in detail without careful study, labor and prayer. Let us take our own position. We shall incur plenty of dislike from certain left-wing groups by doing so. (Witness the *New Masses'* sour remarks about the B<sub>2</sub>H<sub>2</sub> Senators.) We are not looking for favors, but for the truth. Such a policy can be worked out just the same. It is labor well expended. Let us engage in it now, while the sun is still shining, before the night come in which no man worketh.

# THE COMMUNISTS TRY TO CAPTURE THE NEGRO

VINCENT BAKER



AT its annual convention last month, the Young Communist League voted to change its name to American Youth for Democracy and to broaden the membership of the new group to include those who are not Communists.

But the purpose of these enemies of religion and of democracy has not changed at all. It is to organize American youth for a struggle to end freedom, set up a dictatorship over this country—over capitalist and worker alike. Their immediate aim is to control the thinking and activity of as many individuals and groups as possible.

Special attention will, as always, be given to recruiting Negro youth. This is no mere guess. The groundwork was begun at least three months before the convention. Efforts were made to win over Christian Youth groups. Social clubs were contacted. Genuinely liberal groups were duped. An interracial conference in August got the Communist drive under way on a large scale.

Why have these elements achieved so great a degree of success? To begin with, they seem to have unlimited funds. Full-time and part-time workers can be hired. Printing and mimeographing facilities can be had almost at a moment's notice. Political opportunists among Negro leaders are willing to bargain with Communists.

But formidable as these forces are, and difficult as it will be to halt and repel them, I am convinced that ultimately they will fail. And one reason for their failure will be a factual recital of the history of Communist activity among Negro youth. Some of these young people are already asking embarrassing questions while knowing only disjointed parts of that history. When it is pieced together, things will begin to happen. What is this story, the mere repetition of which will interfere with the present plans of the Communist "front"? Let us look back—back over the eventful last few years to about 1936.

The method of "boring from within" was being employed throughout the United States by the Communists. Among Negroes the tactics worked well.

The "American way of life" held little appeal and little promise in the opinion of most thinking Negro youths in the 'thirties. In the political realm, the two major parties showed no disposition to complete the emancipation of the Negro people. The Democrats' New Deal undoubtedly helped the Negro to a degree because it helped the under-

privileged in general. But it did practically nothing to establish racial equality. The Republican Party puts appealing "equal rights" planks in its platforms, and it has been responsible for almost all of the laws to that end in Northern states. But it does nothing about the South, or about the ghettos and economic discriminations of the North.

In the economic realm, the Negro was "the last to be hired and the first to be fired." Factories and labor unions barred him from skilled work. Sales and clerical positions were just about completely closed to Negro girls. The Harlem riots of 1935 precipitated the opening of such positions in that area, but elsewhere the policy remained the same.

Add to this the fact that many motion pictures, radio broadcasts, newspapers and magazines usually depict the Negro as docile, shiftless, ignorant, "happy go lucky"—and it is not difficult to understand the consequent humiliations.

What an ideal situation for the Communists! Instead of second-class citizenship, they offered political equality. Instead of economic "dead-end streets," they offered equal opportunity. Instead of social ostracism, they offered cordiality. The surprising thing is that they did not succeed completely. Even those who knew them for what they were met warnings against collaboration with the crushing question: "What other white young people are concerned about us?" And, in the 'thirties, there was no answer to that question.

The period from late 1935 to August, 1939, was the "Popular Front" period. Disunity among the anti-Fascist forces in Germany had contributed to the success of the Nazi party. Coalition of all progressive forces in the democracies, it was agreed, was the preventive measure necessary. Immediately the Communists hastened to take control of established groups and to organize groups of their own—groups embracing many viewpoints. The trick was to get fellow Communists whose leanings in that direction were not well known into policymaking positions. Whispering campaigns were organized against those who might raise objections. Those who criticized were labeled "reactionaries," "stooges," etc.

With these methods, the American Youth Congress was organized and directed. It gained a tremendous following. Its stand on the race question won many converts among young Negroes. Leaders in both races praised the work of the A.Y.C. Though I knew who controlled the group, I cooper-

ated, with a view to winning the Negro young people away from the Communists and, if the opportunity arose, making the A.Y.C. truly American by helping to change the leadership.

The group had many cells. Among student youth, there was the American Student Union. Among Negro youth, there was the Coordinating Committee for Youth Action in Harlem. The A.Y.C. touched all areas of young people's activity.

It is necessary to understand a little of the "party line" of this period. Briefly, here it is: The profit system is declining. It cannot ever again achieve prosperity. Social upheaval is inevitable. The capitalists, to forestall Socialism, will seek to establish Fascism, as they did in Central Europe. They foster discrimination to divide labor. The progressives must unite to oppose them. Those who for any reason oppose us are our enemies. We have a foreign and a domestic program. At home we support the New Deal, *pending a more dynamic leadership than Roosevelt's*. Abroad we support those who resist aggression and, specifically, the peace policies of the Soviet Union.

Not all of this is untrue. I recite it to compare it with the "Party lines" that followed.

On August 23, 1939, the Russo-German Non-Aggression Pact was signed. Less than two weeks later, Germany invaded Poland. I knew that the Communists would change to an anti-war position, since now to fight Germany might mean to fight Russia as well. But I was confident that the non-Communists in the "Popular Front" would seize the anti-Fascist banner and support the victims of aggression. This did not happen. The groups which two weeks before had called for intervention became the "peace focus."

Word reached some of us that there was one group which the Communists were finding difficult to convert. It was called "Modern Trend." It was genuinely non-partisan. I joined the group and discovered in short order that it had the potentialities of a real town meeting of Negro youth. It was in this group that the struggle between Communists and non-Communists, on equal terms, was to be carried on. The Communists throughout the country organized "The American Peace Mobilization." The American Youth Congress quickly joined the field. The Harlem cell of both these groups was the Harlem Youth Congress. The "Party line" was to denounce the war as an imperialist struggle from which the common people of the world had nothing to gain. This line had a great deal of appeal among Negro youth, who were bitter against those who denounced tyranny abroad and did nothing about oppression at home.

It is interesting to note that in early 1941 an organization calling itself the "Negroes Against War Committee" set up offices in Harlem. This group was a subsidiary of the America First Committee. The Harlem Youth Congress denounced the America First Committee and its subsidiary, but on questions of foreign policy the two groups found themselves, at that time, in mutually embarrassing agreement.

As the degree of American intervention in-

creased, the attacks on the President's foreign policy also increased. The Harlem Youth Congress called its second annual conference for June 21, 1941. I inquired of one of its leaders whether or not it would be possible to have the interventionist viewpoint presented. He replied that this would only confuse the delegates. Twenty-four hours after the conference, the Harlem Youth Congress was pro-war. For, on June 22 the German army invaded Russia.

It was obvious to all who had followed the youth movement that the Communists would return to the anti-Fascist line and would seek to organize a new front.

But at this point Modern Trend, which, since its inception three years before, had been politically neutral, severed all connection with groups controlled by Communists, and refused to cooperate with them on any issue. It adopted a declaration of convictions which, though calling for aid to the heroic Russian army, stated that this agreement with Communists on foreign policy in no way condoned Communism or the subversive activities of American Communists.

Other groups began to follow suit and, by the end of 1941, Christian and student Negro youth organizations in the New York area had frustrated, for the time being at least, efforts to make them "toe" the Stalinist line.

The way was paved for a constructive, genuinely democratic youth program in 1942.

The entry of the United States into the war brought the question of democracy and equal rights to the fore in public discussion and social action. A number of groups were brought into being, or into prominence, by virtue of this. The "Council Against Intolerance," the "Better Race Relations Committee," the "United States Student Assembly" and the "Committee of Racial Equality"—all interracial—are but a few examples. During 1942, Modern Trend was able to go a long way, both in contacting newly-aroused white youth and stimulating new hope, discussion and activity among Negro youth. A number of young people just out of high school were ushered into groups dedicated to real democracy.

It must not be assumed that Communist activity ceased during the period. It was simply unable to prevent or control the new growth. Now, with renewed vigor, unlimited funds and expanded facilities, the Communists have launched a new offensive. It will not succeed. The forces of Christian democracy among Negro and white youths will see to that.

But those combating their influence need your help. This impending struggle for control of the minds of Negro youth can have but one outcome. But your own action can shorten the struggle and assist these young Americans to make their contribution to the development of our great country. None of you who read this is so far removed from this social development that your cooperation does not count. Remember, however, that time is precious—that this cannot be put off until tomorrow; it must be done today.

## FRIENDSHIP WITH RUSSIA

FRIENDSHIP between the United States and Russia is something that any reasonable and patriotic person must desire. Cooperation with Russia will not cease with the war. The United States and Russia have agreed to work alongside each other in the postwar period. The strain of reconstruction, the common enterprise in which the two great nations are engaged, will demand every bit of understanding that we can muster.

Since friendship with Russia is desirable, it is difficult to see what good purpose is served by groups and agencies which make the promotion of American-Russian amity the sounding board for their ideological programs. At the same time they employ methods which are calculated to stir up more ill feeling and suspicion against Russia in one night than can be allayed in a year of diligent propaganda. This is frankly no help to good relations.

For the Communists and their well known fellow travelers and spokesmen to take over the cause of promoting American-Russian friendship is (from the point of view of past history) about the same thing as the Dutch taking Holland. But neither Mr. Stalin nor Mr. Hull nor any of the principals at the Moscow Conference seems to be anxious to continue identification of Russian-American friendship with fealty to the program of the American Communist Party. Indeed, there appears on their part a rather distinct yearning to be wholly cleared of even the suspicion of Communist Party embraces.

But that suspicion will persist as long as high Administration officials appear on public occasions in company with, or under the patronage of, persons notorious as propagandists for the Soviet regime in the day when it was all-out to attack religion, and was the humming center of the Comintern. Now that the *Berbozhnik* has ceased and the Comintern is dissolved, the friends of these concerns might be allowed to retire with them. Furthermore, the same suspicion will stick closer than a burr to a cow's tail when platform speakers, not excluding the same high Administration officials, follow the Party line by uttering bitterly vituperative denunciations, such as were voiced at the November 8 meeting in Madison Square Garden. We grant they suffer much provocation. A speaker may excuse himself by saying he is merely replying in kind. But the spectacle is none the less deplorable. It is a weak cause which can only return smears by smears. Prime Minister Churchill's November 10 remarks definitely apply:

Even if things are said in one country or the other which are provocative, which are clumsy, which are indiscreet or even malicious or untrue, there should be no angry rejoinder. If facts have to be stated, let them be stated without heat or bitterness.

Since friendship with Russia is a worthy and noble cause, let it appear for the best that is in it. Some methods that are now employed to promote it are merely hastening its own extinction.

## EDIT

## EUROPE AND MOSCOW

NOT one European nation was present at the conference which drew up the framework of a united world working for peace. Naturally this has caused some bitterness and mistrust. The French thought that they should have been included, and the Poles seem to feel that their claims were deliberately sidetracked.

Some commentators read in this the end of Europe. They think that the age-old hatreds and the blood-lettings have drained Europe of that spirit which once civilized the world. On the surface it might seem that outside nations are determined to settle the fate of Europe. Yet, after all, only the framework of world order has been sketched, and within that framework "peace-loving" European nations will be invited to solve their own problems.

The word "peace-loving" may have been chosen deliberately to serve warning on the nations of Europe that they must put aside once and for all the eternal bickerings that continually threaten the peace of the world. There are so many militant minorities in Europe that it would be impossible to draw a map of Europe that would satisfy them all. There have been so many conquests and reconquests and expansions and withdrawals and changes of sovereignty that not the saintliest of conciliators could decide to the last acre what belongs to whom. Throughout the remainder of the war, European nations must put aside excessive nationalism, tone down conflicting claims, think rather of Europe than of France or Belgium or Italy or Poland.

True, Moscow looms large in Europe. For good or ill? There is this strange thing about Russian history. Though a large nation, rich in resources and manpower, with a profound and deeply religious culture, Russia has never exerted a powerful influence on the world.

Perhaps Russia's day of destiny has come. The Russian people have gone through twenty-five years of Communistic hell in preparation for their day. They have come through three years of fire and sword. Will it be their destiny to quicken the dying Faith of Europe—or drag Europe with themselves deeper into Communism? Partly at least, the answer lies with us, our attitudes and our prayers.

## LIQUOR AND CULTURE

SAINT PAUL, who believed that a little wine is good for the stomach, should be pleased to see American wines coming into their own.

A Frenchman or an Italian will sit all afternoon at a sidewalk cafe, endlessly sipping his one glass of wine. No waiter hovers nearby, solicitously wiping spots from a spotless table. No manager pointedly asks if he would not like a refill. Sipping his wine is an aromatic accompaniment to social life, and he is completely and soberly happy about it. And all others—passersby, fellow-sippers at nearby tables, waiters, policemen, clergymen, managers—smile benignly at him.

The American prefers his cocktail—or two—or three. Right now he is having difficulty getting one. There is a scarcity of hard liquor. Prices are skyrocketing. One breathless observer reported what he considered a new high of seven dollars for a pint of a well known brand. Other observers insist that well known brands cannot be had for seventy dollars.

Hoarding, of course, is going on. Hoarding by citizens who want to beat the new taxes. Hoarding by dealers who are looking forward to a holiday rush and perhaps holiday prices. Hoarding by wholesalers. The bootleg market is gaily opening wide its doors. The ancient and honorable pastime of hijacking (*hijacking*: an attack in force by one crook on an equally crooked competitor's truck) has exploded again on the American scene. Prohibition racketeers are repolishing the plate of armored cars.

We could wax indignantly moralistic about the whole thing, worry about Prohibition again and all its evils. Strangely we are not much upset. Not many people really need their liquor. As for ourselves, if hard liquor cannot be had except for a price that would supply a memorable Christmas dinner for many hungry children, we shall make a virtue of necessity and swear off for the duration. Then, glowing with self-righteousness, we shall hie us to our *prie-dieu* and pray fervently that all who "can take it or leave it alone" will leave it alone and buy bonds instead of bottles. We hope that this shortage will be for America the dawn of that higher culture, symbolized by the glass of wine caressingly twirled, appreciatively savored.

## MANPOWER SOLUTION

FOR the past two weeks a great part of the news from Washington has been in sad contrast with the encouraging dispatches from the war fronts. The Russians were driving the Nazis from the Ukraine; Generals Clark and Montgomery were steadily advancing in Italy; in the Solomons our men had landed on Bougainville Island, bombed Rabaul heavily and destroyed a large number of Japanese ships. But, on the home front, group quarreled with group and politics took shameless priority over the waging of war.

From strife-torn Washington there did come, however, one very hopeful piece of news. On November 6, Paul V. McNutt, War Manpower Commissioner, announced with ill-disguised satisfaction that his National Labor-Management Policy Committee had formulated a program which promised to render a Service Act unnecessary. After the many complications which have made manpower mobilization one of the two or three worst bottlenecks in the war program, it was a relief to hear that some solution had been devised. It was even better news to learn that the solution had come from the cooperative efforts of leaders of Labor, Industry and Agriculture.

The implications of the report of the Labor-Management Policy Committee are, we think, more important than the report itself. After all, the new program, however carefully worked out, may prove to be inadequate, but the bare fact that leaders of Labor, Industry and Agriculture, faced with the loss of their liberty to government agencies, sat down together and planned a program for the benefit of the whole country and not of any particular group has a lasting and hopeful significance.

When the firing stops, the nation will be confronted with the gigantic task of shifting from a wartime to a peacetime economy. The problems involved in this transition are of such magnitude that they can be solved in a democratic way only by the wholehearted cooperation of the nation's organized economic groups, assisted, where necessary, by the Government. If this cooperation is lacking, if agriculture wars with industry, if labor and management return to the dog-eat-dog struggle of the pre-war years, then it is not merely probable but certain that Washington will step in and run the country. After fighting totalitarianism abroad, we would thus risk it at home.

Henry J. Kaiser, the eminent industrialist, adverted to this danger last week in an interview with a representative of the New York *World-Telegram*. Advocating friendly relations between labor and management, Mr. Kaiser warned bluntly that discord, confusion and complete rupture faced the country unless present hates were exorcized. "There is bitterness abroad in the land today," he said, "class conflict and deep antagonisms." Unless these are resolved, he feared that this country might go the way of Italy, Russia and Germany.

Obviously the agreement announced by Mr. McNutt is one way to resolve them.

## CORPORATION TAXES

AT the present time, the primary objective of the tax on corporate income is to derive revenue to pay for the enormous cost of waging total war. A secondary objective is to ensure that corporations do not profit unduly from the production of war materials.

Most of the people in this country, as well as many corporation directors and stockholders, wholeheartedly approve these objectives. Differences of opinion, however, arise when the time comes to decide what precisely constitutes "undue profits," and what part of corporate income should be handed over to the Government in the form of taxes and what part should be retained by the corporations. Corporation officials rightly insist that there is a point beyond which a rise in tax rates becomes self-defeating. They emphasize, and justly, that excessively burdensome taxation tends to destroy initiative and to encourage inefficiency. This in turn results in decreased production and a falling off in the Government's share of corporate earnings.

Furthermore, they explain, when the day of peace finally comes, corporations now wholly engaged in war work must have the resources to finance the expensive process of reconversion. On their ability to reconvert speedily and to meet, in sound financial condition, the deferred demands of consumers, depends to a very large extent the peace and prosperity of the country. Hence, the spokesmen of business insist, the necessity for raising revenue and the obligation of discouraging profiteering must not lead to measures which will destroy incentive now and leave corporations financially unprepared to deal with the grave problems of the postwar world.

With this attitude only "business baiters" who regard all corporations as inventions of the devil will care to quarrel.

The practical, and debatable, point in the whole discussion is this: is the Government, through corporate taxes and renegotiation of war contracts to prevent excessive profits, claiming too large or too small a share of corporate earnings? Or, are present tax rates about right?

Recently, powerful business interests attempted to persuade Congress either to abolish the renegotiation clause in war contracts, or to weaken it. This Review, having assured itself that renegotiation was being administered fairly and competently, opposed this attempt. Accordingly, we commend the Congress for having up till now refused to be stampeded into repudiating its own anti-profiteering legislation.

At the present time, the question of changing the tax rates on corporate income has superseded the debate over renegotiation in Congressional circles. Representatives of business interests, stressing the necessity for accumulating reserves to finance reconversion, have gone on record before the House Ways and Means Committee as being opposed to any advance in the present rates. On the other hand, Secretary of the Treasury Morgen-

thau, Economic Stabilization Director Vinson and Marriner Eccles, Chairman of the Board of the Federal Reserve System, insist that the corporations can and ought to pay from \$800,000,000 to \$1,100,000,000 in additional levies. Caught between these conflicting recommendations, public opinion is confused—and so, apparently, is that of the Congress.

Fortunately, three reports on corporate finances have come to light in recent weeks which should help the public and the legislators to make up their minds.

The first was a study released by the Federal Reserve Board showing that business deposits as of July 31, 1943, totalled \$38,700,000,000, or seventy per cent of all the demand deposits in the nation's commercial banks on that date. On the basis of these data, the Board suggested that "even now, business *in the aggregate* may be approaching a position where its reconversion and immediate postwar expansion needs can be financed with a minimum of reliance on bank loans and other external financing."

The second report, which was prepared by the United States Treasury's Division of Tax Research, dealt with corporate earnings since 1939. According to this statement, by December 31, 1943, corporations will have earned \$29,000,000,000 after taxes. The Treasury experts estimate dividend payments during this four-year period at \$16,700,000,000, the corporations retaining \$12,300,000,000. After allowing for investments in plant and equipment during 1940 and 1941, they conclude cautiously that "it would appear that these net retentions will provide a substantial base for postwar expansion and growth."

The third report emanated from a highly respected private source. The National City Bank of New York announced that net profits of 275 leading corporations at the end of the third quarter were thirteen per cent above the same period last year. These figures confirmed previous Department of Commerce estimates that corporate net profits for the first six months of this year were fourteen per cent higher than in 1942.

Taken together, and allowing for all the slippery intricacies of corporate finance, these reports tend to show that corporations can pay higher taxes without jeopardizing their postwar position.

As the Congress studies these figures, it would do well to ponder also the warning contained in a letter from Guy T. Helvering, formerly Internal Revenue Commissioner, to Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau. In one of his last official acts before leaving office to become a Federal Judge, Mr. Helvering warned that public indignation over postwar tax refunds to corporations might "dwarf even the experience" after World War I. To prove his point, he cited unofficial figures which show that postwar refunds may run from \$15,000,000,000 to as high as \$30,000,000,000. If, despite this converging evidence, the Congress makes no change in present corporate tax rates, the public is in a position to ask some pointed and embarrassing questions.

B. L. M.

# LITERATURE AND ARTS

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## TENETS FOR REVIEWERS

HAROLD C. GARDINER

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MUCH as I regret it, this article will be full of the perpendicular pronoun—one has been used already. It will have to be, for the book reviewer's life, like the policeman's, is not a happy (but it is an interesting) one. And I would like to keep the interest alive and kicking by responding to some criticisms that have come into the office of my reviews of four recent books. This, I hope, will not strike anyone as a personal vindication; it is intended to be a discussion of some principles which I must insist upon, in face of the criticism.

Were it a question merely of judicious taste, this article would not be written. But when the present writer is charged, as he was in one correspondent's letter, with having "farmed out" AMERICA's columns to *P.M.* and *The Protestant*, the very nature of this Review demands an answer. This accusation was occasioned by my reviews of Asch's *The Apostle* and Douglas' *The Robe*; a comparison of these two reviews, the correspondent holds, shows that I have "adroitly boosted Asch and damned *The Robe*."

This, I maintain, is absolutely false and rises from a mis-reading of the reviews; both books are condemned, and *The Apostle* much more severely than *The Robe*, for Asch's book is castigated purely and solely on the ground that it is doctrinally false, Douglas' on the score, not so much that it is doctrinally unsound (though it is extremely hazy on such points as the Divinity of Christ), as that it simply fails, in this reviewer's judgment, to come off as an historical novel. On artistic grounds, Asch's book is far superior to Douglas'—in characterization, in atmosphere, in knowledge of the times and customs; but if these excellences cannot be acknowledged without "adroitly boosting" the book, then fair play means nothing.

This would seem to be the nub of the criticism, for the correspondent has this to say about the author of *The Apostle*:

I conclude that Asch is a pompous and evil charlatan. . . . Knowing the trend nowadays of the insidious, practical application of the Asch thesis, I recognize Asch as a dangerous anti-Christian.

This brings to the fore a principle that I think must be followed in book-reviewing: *what is to be reviewed is the book and not the author*. I, too, recognize *The Apostle* as anti-Christian; but I cannot say that I know that Asch is a charlatan. There is an eternal and absolute difference between good and bad as against right and wrong. Right and

wrong concern logical truth; good and bad, moral truth. Asch is wrong; but, for all I know, may be a saint; his book is wrong, but I have to give him credit for being sincere in the writing of it.

This imputing of motives is an easy fault for Catholic readers to fall into. We hold the right so vividly and tenaciously that we find it hard to conceive how someone can differ from us and still be sincere. I heard only recently of a venerable and learned priest, whom I know well, who simply would not read the *Song of Bernadette*, because he felt there was some sort of indignity in a Jew's writing of Our Lady.

But a reviewer in an influential Catholic journal cannot yield to such one-sided judgments, if he is to be at once a Catholic and a critic. The book must be judged on its own merits, literary, doctrinal and historical; Asch's book is high in two of these qualities, utterly false in the third; Douglas' volume is only fair in the two, and wobbly, to say the least, in the third. If that judgment be correct, which of the two books has been more thoroughly condemned for Catholic readers?

A second principle in reviewing is forced on me for discussion by several stormy letters and accusatory reviews which take AMERICA to task for its "recommendation" of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. It is this: you cannot, without distinctions and reservations, apply the metaphysical principle of *bonum ex integra causa, malum ex quocumque defectu* to moral and cultural matters. This axiom, which one of my critics translates "a thing is good when there is not a flaw in it, but a single flaw makes it evil," if applied as the criterion, for example, of a good man, would force us to say that a single moral defect would make him an evil man. A flaw in a painting, a statue, does not make it a bad work of art; it prevents it from being *perfect*, but it may still be excellent. Nor can we jump to the conclusion that a single passage, or even a number of passages, necessarily make a book a bad book.

So much for the principle. How does it work out when applied to *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*? Granted, for the argument, that there are morally bad passages in the book, can the book therefore be sweepingly condemned as one written "with a total disregard for decency"? To hold that is to have missed the whole meaning and message of the story. The whole burden of the tale rests on the thesis that character can dominate environment; it is precisely the fundamental decency of Francie, the little girl growing up in the slums, and of her hard-working mother and, yes, of her drunken father, that throws around the book an atmosphere of the Christian virtue of hope. The whole family hopes that they can keep uncontaminated by their environment, the author hopes for and with them,

and, by implication, for others, too, born into a slum world.

That was the exact point of the contrast drawn in the two reviews of kindred books. *None But the Lonely Heart*, written, too, about a slum adolescent, has none of this buoyancy about it; it is deadening from start to finish, a hopeless book about hopeless people. And yet, in reviewing even that book, the critic must in all fairness mention that the writing of it was an ingenious feat.

Is all this as much as to say that the message, the atmosphere, of a book may be a perfectly sufficient excuse for the dragging in of dirty passages? By no means. Absolutely not. But it emphatically does mean to say that to miss the whole story, the effective motive force behind the book and the operative virtue in the book, and concentrate exclusively on the shocking passages, is to exercise but poorly the function of critic and guide.

But is *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* dotted with dirty passages? Can we grant that? I hold that there is not one obscene passage in the whole 443 pages. Even the rather melodramatic scene where Francie is unsuccessfully attacked by the pervert is objectively told; there is no allure to it, no incitement, and it fits quite normally into the development of the story and of the girl's character. Through it, she comes to realize more deeply her mother's deep and even fierce protective love.

The language of the book is vulgar, but be it remembered that this and all the other points of disagreement between me and my critics were pointed out in the review. But what other language could the author employ? Could she say "you see, Francie heard some awful, but positively awful words as she was growing up, and I think you know the ones I mean"? What reality would that be, what honesty? To picture a child growing up in the slums, the slums have to be pictured and they are, we understand, not lovely.

"But there we have you," the critics cry, "for this book does not picture the slums; at least, not the ones of Williamsburg in 1900-1910. We know, for we lived there." Well, there they do have me, for I never lived there. But the book is, nevertheless, authentic; it has the great truth of verisimilitude in it. Williamsburg is the name the author chose; it might just as well be Chicago or Saint Louis or London—it is the slums of all the world and Francie is the little girl who is not smirched by all the poverty and coarseness and profanity.

But the leading characters are poor Catholics, and therefore the book is to be roundly condemned, is the further charge. As one protester too neatly puts it:

It is unfair, false and defamatory to portray as Catholics or representatives of the Catholic Church those who are unfaithful to her teachings. (Their lives exclude them from membership in the soul of the Church.)

But come, certainly I can admit in a book, as we do in the whole concept of sacramental life, that a Catholic can sin. Furthermore, why must so many of our Catholic critics immediately take it as a literary dogma that every character in a book is

supposed to represent a class? Francie and her family are Catholics, but nowhere is it stated or the impression given that the author thinks all Catholics are like them. And, as a matter of fact, it would not be too bad if more Catholics were like them in many ways, for, despite their being uninformed, poorly instructed, their lives in the book are lived, as far as we can see, in God's grace.

This confusion of characterization with classification reaches its nadir when one correspondent can write in that the recent *Kansas Irish* is "false." False? Why, the book was the author's reminiscences of his own family, and presumably he is not a liar. False in the sense that not all Catholic families are like that one? Of course not, nor should they be; but portrayal is not an exhortation to emulation.

Finally, then, who can read the book? Can it and others like it be recommended? I hold yes, when and if the reviewer gives the necessary cautionary remarks. If you are warned that a book is vulgar, and you simply do not like vulgar passages, then such books are not for you. If you can take them in stride, for the sake of the strength and warmth and hope that may underlie them, then such books need qualified recommending. And that no normal adult can go through *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* "without mental and moral infection," I find impossible to believe.

This whole rather distasteful discussion has nothing to do, as I remarked in the beginning, with mere matters of taste. I am not trying to convince anyone that he ought to like *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. This type of tale may simply not appeal to you—well and good. No more may the somber but glorious theme of *Labyrinthine Ways* be to your taste; but it is a great Catholic book. This is rather a question of the grounds for issuing a blanket condemnation, and I am firmly convinced that not a few Catholic critics do great harm to the reputation of Catholic intelligence by forgetting that any normal, balanced reader (and we trust that all of AMERICA'S are such) can be solid enough in faith and morals not to find some vulgar expressions a cause of mental and moral infection.

If that be not true, then our Catholic education is raising hot-house plants, indeed. Not that we ought to have a course in vulgarity as a part of the curriculum, so that Catholics will recognize it when they meet it. But our courses in literature and religion ought to equip future readers with stability and moral poise enough to enable them to read books that are realistic—yes, let's use the horrid word. For there is nothing wrong with realism in art and literature; it is a necessary ingredient. It is only when realism descends to pornography that it becomes false art, and that the book under discussion is pornographic, merits nothing but a flat denial.

So much for these four books and their criticism. Next week, I shall return to a more general treatment of this whole vexed subject. Perhaps it is time to lay down some general, workable principles of what does actually constitute a bad book. I will have at it, anyway.

# BOOKS

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## CENIUS IN HORSE-SENSE

THE DUKE. By Richard Aldington. The Viking Press.  
\$3.75

IN the year 1808, Wellington celebrated a peacefully obscure fortieth birthday. Twenty-one of those years had been spent in the Army. He had "got pretty high on the tree" since he came home from India. He was a Lieutenant General. If Wellington had died then, or if his career had carried him no farther up the tree, he would have been little more remembered than scores of other successful soldiers, sailors and administrators. But he was about to move into history. A few weeks after his birthday he received an appointment to command a detachment of His Majesty's Army. This expeditionary force had originally been collected with the idea of operating against Spain in her great colonies of South America. It was then ordered to cooperate with Spanish armies in the defense of Spain against France; what it actually accomplished was the liberation of Portugal.

During the whole of the Peninsular War, Wellington never slept out of his clothes. For days on end he was on horseback from sunrise to sunset; many a time he had not a moment to eat during the whole twenty-four hours of a day; he learned to sleep by snatches at any odd time, anywhere. He had to train every one of his generals, create his own supply and transport organizations, fight battles without cavalry and sieges without artillery, and frequently see his plans made vain by the parsimony and stupidity of his own Government. His junior officers were too often careless, his men always drunkards, sometimes thieves. Yet England noted, and the rest of Europe remarked, that one Marshal of France after another—Junot, Soult, Victor, Masséna, Ney—failed against the same troublesome army and the same hardworking general. So far as Wellington was concerned, the Peninsular War was excellent training for Waterloo.

The Duke, as Mr. Aldington portrays him, was a master of the obvious and the immediate. The most striking aspect of his intelligence was a shrewd horse-sense which in the long run amounted to genius, or at any rate sufficed to defeat genius. Strong common sense, honesty, integrity, unceasing hard work, a resolution to make himself obeyed and an unflagging belief in ultimate triumph—these were the main qualities which enabled Wellington to persevere and at last triumph in his long, unequal duel with the tremendous military power of the French Empire.

In the years following Waterloo, Wellington followed an indisputably reactionary line in politics. An outright Tory, he fought the Reform Bill of 1832 to the death and opposed many of the long overdue social, political and economic changes in England. The reason for this strange conduct, perhaps, was that Wellington never understood England and the English. Until he was nearly fifty, he was little more than an occasional visitor to England, and imbibed his political principles in Ireland and India.

Mr. Aldington does not pretend to be a military historian, and his scintillating urbanity just barely tides us over those pages devoted to military maneuvers. Oddly enough, we are not permitted more than a glimpse of Wellington's family life, nor is it recorded whether the Duke ever prayed or entered a church for private devotions. On one or two occasions, Christianity seems to be confused with bigotry. Yet Mr. Aldington has a deft touch and if he adds nothing to the Wellington legend, at least he has told the familiar tale with humor, irony and, on the whole, great understanding.

JOHN J. O'CONNOR

## WHAT LOVE LAUGHS AT

THE LITTLE LOCKSMITH. By Katherine Butler Hathaway. Coward-McCann. \$2.50

THIS is not purely an account of Katherine Butler Hathaway's acquisition of a country house. It is more, it is an intimate, spiritual autobiography. It is impossible to classify this book; it is unique. The author gives as her reason for telling her story the necessity to "express my thanks for the things that have happened to me." Her writing has the delicacy and the finesse of Katherine Mansfield's. Although she tells of physical deformity, she does it with such restraint that the reader will be conscious only of the universal elements in her autobiography and of the very real charm of the author herself.

As an invalid child, strapped to a board, the author experienced all the imaginative delights that an intelligent, beloved child enjoys, only that she experienced them more keenly and has expressed them with effortless precision.

At the age of fifteen, she was released from the long confinement to her bed, and it was then that she first experienced the horror and heartbreak of knowing that in spite of expert medical care and in spite of years of suffering, she was always to be somewhat like the little locksmith with "the strange, awful peak in his back." She then realized that she would never be exactly like other people.

With all the rebellion of youth she longed to be the most disturbing, the most poised and the most heartless of beauties. Instead, she was doomed to be treated as a clever, extraordinary creature who was strangely removed from the ordinary experiences of life. Her beloved older brother encouraged and praised her poetic ability, but her brother's handsome college friends never thought of falling in love with her.

In order to subdue her feeling of emotional and sexual frustration and a general sense of unreality, she began the painful career of writing, a step which made it necessary for her to assert her independence from her family, and led to her eventual purchase of the house at Castine, Maine. In regard to her courageous struggle against mental disintegration and despair, she says:

... a block of paper and a pencil had saved me. They had not only saved me by satisfying my hunger and canceling the overwhelming terror of the universe, but they gave me also an inexhaustible form of entertainment because they gave me, or seemed to give me, the equivalent of all sorts of human experience. There was no end and no limit to this kind of living. Among all the people whom I knew I felt that I was the enviable one. . . . I had substituted the invulnerable passion of art for vulnerable human passion.

The author describes the pangs connected with her development as a writer, the necessity of risking being misunderstood by her family and the frightening realization that the years were passing and that she had produced no concrete work to her credit. But the pangs of the artist are assuaged by the delight and satisfaction that she finds in the purchase and remodeling of her house, a house that is to be a home for artists, children and lovers:

... a safe refuge for three kinds of people, who are alike in being at a particular disadvantage in the outside world because they all possess and are guided by the mystic's innocence toward life, the fearless innocence which is not afraid of facing everything, and facing everything, dares to believe as Blake says that all that is, is holy.

Katherine Hathaway does not complete her story but,

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in the epilog, the reader will gather that she achieved the happiness which she sought. She seemed to have had a premonition of her own death, which occurred last December, but she was grateful to God for the magnificent experience of life. *The Little Locksmith* is a book whose individuality seems to come directly from the sensitivity and greatness of its author.

JOAN GRACE

## POSTWAR PROBLEMS' "MUST"

PIUS XII ON WORLD PROBLEMS. By James W. Naughton, S.J. The America Press. \$2

MOST writers and speakers are allowed an "off-day" every once in a while. Not so the Pope. His every public utterance is expected to be profound, practical, quotable, a very high compliment indeed to the fine tradition of Papal documents.

Our present Holy Father has already given us more than his share of such documents in the short space of his reign, and every one of them has been fresh and vigorous, deep-cutting and progressive. Probably more than any Pope before him, he has put himself into his utterances, and all the tensely emotional sincerity of a passionately sympathetic personality. To him all men of all races are brothers. He feels for them, suffers with them. Not only as a teacher, but as a brother, a father, he offers counsel, rebuke, guidance, all based on his deep consciousness of the "Unity of Human Society." That was the theme of his first encyclical and has run through his every pronouncement to date: unity, justice, charity, peace.

Many of us would, if we had time, memorize passage after passage of his statements for their very modern quotability. At least we would file them carefully for study and propagation. Fortunately, this present volume does a good deal of the work for us. It indexes the Papal thoughts, fits them into a very logical sequence, and spins through them a thread of explanation and commentary. As a presentation of the profound and amazingly complete program of Pius XII for the solution of world problems, it is highly satisfactory reading, obligatory reading for all who are in any way interested in the postwar problems. As a volume of reference, it is indispensable.

Only one criticism. Would that the author had had the courage to revise some of the heavy translations from which Pius XII has suffered. His own style to those who have heard him speak is simple, direct, easy-flowing. Some of the English translations are, to put it mildly, abominable. Take, for example, this classic, which is fourth among his conditions for a new world order: "Triumph over those germs of conflict which consist in two-sided differences in the field of world economy; hence progressive action, balanced by correspondent degrees . . ." Help! Maybe it is the war and poor transmission, maybe an understandable haste to put translations before the public as early as possible. . . . However, in a second edition (and the first should, on its merits, be speedily exhausted) perhaps the author will remove this blemish from an excellent work.

JOHN P. DELANEY

MAN'S UNKNOWN ANCESTORS. By Raymond W. Murray. The Bruce Publishing Co. \$3.50

FATHER MURRAY addresses two classes of readers in this book: the student beginning the study of prehistory and the average person, who has all too often made the Sunday supplements his standard text in anthropology. Many features of the book conspire to satisfy both classes of readers. The first chapter, with its historical retrospect, provides a good perspective over the whole field; while the glossary at the end gives the key to many hieroglyphic names and terms.

Too often texts in prehistory concentrate on the Old World origin of man, and set up the general paradigms for the cultures of the Old Stone, New Stone and Metal Ages, as they developed in the Old World. Naturally there is much to be said for such an approach. But in

a text designed to captivate the average person and, therefore, the average American, more is required. Hence, after marshaling, in a very complete way, the data on the physical origin of man and the cultural periods of the Old World, Father Murray furnishes, in eight teeming chapters, the cognate data on man in the New World.

It is almost trite to recall that some anthropologists have created the picture of an irreconcilable conflict between religion and anthropological science. Wisely, therefore, Father Murray devotes an excellent section of his book to the dissipation of this fallacy. It is here that some will note omissions, which undoubtedly the author would supply in lecturing on the subject.

Thus, it seems to me that precisely because the author aims at offering a brief reconciliation of religion and science, some presentation and critique of current evolutionary theory was demanded. For while some prominent theologians, as, for instance, P. Boyer, S.J., Dean of the Gregorian University, attach no censure to the theory that allows some instrumentality to a brute form in the formation of the body of the first man under a special providence of God, it must be recalled that a qualified form of evolution is envisaged. Certainly they reprobate a pure chance evolution such as is postulated by most neo-Darwinists. Some textual supplement on these various theories would appear to be demanded.

Currently some anthropologists and zoologists have resurrected the multiple human species theory. They would bracket all men into two species: the *non-sapiens* and *sapiens* groups. I am aware that a few Catholic writers have seen in the multiple species theory no intrinsic challenge to the unity of the human race and the common descent of all men since Adam's time from the same progenitor. But if these species, as Father Murray seems to suggest, are given "equal antiquity," it is difficult to see how the unity of the human race can be maintained.

Father Murray is not advancing a singular opinion when he states that "there is nothing to prevent an individual Catholic from accepting the hypothesis [of man's animal ancestry] as long as he believes that God started the evolutionary process, and that He intervened again to create man's soul" (p. 352). It may be that under certain circumstances it might be justifiable to waive any further statement on this important topic. But in a text that will be widely used in Catholic Colleges, more would seem to be called for. For instance, does that statement satisfy all the directive decrees of the Biblical Commission? A Catholic must hold the formation of the body of the first woman from that of Adam. He must accept the common descent of all men since Adam's time from that progenitor. There is nothing in the scientific evidence that counters these directives and the doctrine of the unity of the human race, so there can be no embarrassment in mentioning them.

HUGH J. BIHLER

**THE BIG ROCK CANDY MOUNTAIN.** By Wallace Stegner. Duell, Sloan and Pearce. \$3

THE name is intriguing, the style is inviting, but the story of Bo Mason has little to offer the discriminating reader. It is the life of a small-time bootlegger, who obligingly runs liquor from the States to Canada, when Canada is dry, and shifts easily to running liquor from Canada to the States when this country goes dry.

Bo is a rebel from the day he is born until the day he dies. He lives his entire life outside the pale of law and order and the blight of this furtive existence is clearly apparent in his wife's unhappiness and in the stunted social and spiritual growth of his children. He is not a vicious man or a lazy one, and possibly in another environment might have achieved the success he sought so long and furiously—his "Big Rock Candy Mountain." All his life as gambler and bootlegger it eluded him, and he finally died as he lived, cheaply, sordidly and violently.

We cannot like Bo Mason, but we can respect and admire the talent that created him. Mr. Stegner has

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### Saints Were Children Too

Chesterton once said that if a child of six were told that Tommy opened the door and saw a lion he would be excited, but that a child of three would be excited if told only that Tommy opened the door. Any parent knows that this expresses a profound truth in the matter of juveniles: you can read anything to a child of three; at six he is more critical—perhaps—from ten to fourteen much more critical—certainly.

For by ten years old, school has done its deadly work on the child. Chesterton has also expressed this when he recalls his own enjoyment of learning poetry and even the Greek alphabet from his father in the way of play and contrasts it with learning anything at school "during the period of what is commonly called education; that is, the period during which I was being instructed by somebody I did not know about something I did not want to know."

Here then is the hard task of the writer of saints' lives for older children. He must tell them something of the days the saint lived in—and that is suspect as a History Lesson; something of the country he lived in—and that is a Geography Lesson; something of the saint's holiness—and that may well be Religious Instruction insidiously disguised.

Both Sara Maynard and Mary Fabyan Windeatt have escaped these snares by the simple but difficult expedient of making saints interesting—and making them, too, saints who really were once children themselves: Benedict with an old nurse who wanted him to keep his feet dry and did not want him to be a hermit; Rose with a hut in the garden and mosquitoes who did not buzz or sting when she told them to behave. Getting to know these children the young reader will want to know the things about them: the whens (even if that is a kind of history), the wheres (which now is not so much geography as like looking up on a map where your father may be in Africa), and above all the kind of thing that made a boy or girl become a saint. This part is really so interesting that parents and teachers might well learn from it how to lead back from the saints into a kind of religious instruction that ceases to be "just one more lesson." So in the end it may happen to each of these books that, in the words of the immortal Belloc of *Cautionary Tales* and *The Moral Alphabet*:

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spent a great deal of time on this work—the background is flawless, and the characterization is competent and consistent. Through sheer power as a writer he has made drama out of dull, dry and unappealing material.

ELIZABETH M. JOYCE

### PREVIEW OF HISTORY. By Raymond Gram Swing.

Doubleday, Doran and Co. \$2  
THOSE who are aided to carry on in these hectic days by the reassuring voice of their favorite news commentator, Raymond Gram Swing, will want this volume, with its selection of broadcasts from 1938 to 1943, inclusive. An added section of collected speeches presents eight of the longer addresses given by Mr. Swing in the period 1940-1943.

It is not easy to find much in the daily broadcasts either to praise or condemn, since they constitute merely a presentation, so to say, of the news bulletins and, after all, a news bulletin is simply a news bulletin. Mr. Swing consistently refuses to advance any criticism of the national administration. This unwillingness to criticize may well guarantee his radio security, but it is not a characteristic of an active mind, and is hardly a virtue in a news commentator. The stability associated with his broadcasts is, however, a feature which many desire and appreciate, and that feature is evident in his longer addresses, which to this reviewer seem more valuable than the daily broadcasts, which are necessarily prepared rather hurriedly. As a record of events of the past three years, it is not meant to be complete, but it is sufficiently inclusive to be an account of the important developments since Pearl Harbor.

PAUL KINIERY

### HOME FRONT MEMO. By Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace and Co. \$3

IN this book the author records the "zigzag course, the hill-and-dale path of his mind, heart and intuition during the war." It is a collection of chapters, each a separate memo, bearing no relation to the one preceding or following. Divided into three sections, the first part of the book contains five chapters on "The Unfathomed Lincoln." Under the heading, "On The Platform And In The Air Waves," are a collection of speeches and radio broadcasts. The third part of the book is devoted to "Once-A-Week Pieces For The Papers," arranged by chapters in chronological sequence, the first dated April 6, 1941, and the last, June 6, 1943.

Interspersed among the prose gems are a few poems, the three most famous being: *The Man With The Broken Fingers*, *Take a Letter to Dimitri Shostakovich*, and *The Fireborn Are at Home in Fire*.

A collection of poems, legends and folklore make up the concluding chapters. The last thirty-two pages in the book contain beautiful photographic reproductions of the Road to Victory exhibition, "a procession of murals of the nation at war," directed by Lieutenant Commander Edward Steichen, U. S. N. R., with the text written by Mr. Sandburg.

What with Sandburg's inimitable, pithy style, it would be difficult to single out any one particular chapter for special attention or recommendation, unless it would be the poignant poem, *The Man With the Broken Fingers*; as the range of subjects is so wide and varied as to appeal to a large reading public.

*Home Front Memo*, is dedicated to the "life, works, and memory of Stephen Vincent Benét."

ANNE STUART

JOHN J. O'CONNOR, until recently head of the History Department at St. John's College, Brooklyn, is at present working on an Army publication in Washington.

ANNE STUART, of Dubuque, is a frequent contributor to Catholic periodicals.

JOHN P. DELANEY, Staff member, was Director of the Vatican Radio before the outbreak of the war.

# MUSIC

THE Ballet Theatre has just completed a fall season of four weeks at the Metropolitan Opera House. It was not as successful as it might have been, for several reasons. One of the leading dancers, Alicia Markova, was absent from the company because of a serious illness, leaving only a half dozen first-rate artists in this large group. They evidently did not lend enough box-office appeal, for the audiences were on the small side. With all of the famous ballerinas now residing in this country, New York should be able to point with pride to a company that would give them employment, as many of them are idle. The Ballet Theatre has not done so, nor has it improved the routine and unity of its ensemble.

Massine created *Mademoiselle Angot* for this fall season and it turned out to be an amateurish effort; David Lachine was the choreographer of the Ukrainian folktale, *Fair of Sorochinsk*, which also received its world premiere at this time; this creation was worthy of a great ballet company because of its strength and freshness. Last spring, Anthony Tudor's *Lilac Garden* was brought to the attention of AMERICA readers for its individuality and charm. Mr. Tudor devised *Dim Lustre* for this fall season, and it is considerably weaker than the six other ballets of his origination for this company—weaker alike in invention and in dramatic effect.

The story is called a "psychological episode," and it concerns a gentleman and lady at a ball. They dance to *Burleske*, an early piano concerto by Richard Strauss, and their memories dim the reality of the present. Each time their memories became active, the stage lights went out; when they came on again the hero and heroine danced either with his (or her) reflection or with imaginary figures; and then after a second blackout and a third, the hero and heroine was brought back to reality again.

There was so little difference in the dance style of the world of reality and that of the imagination that it did not develop a live interest in the audience, the entire ballet being too much in the same color and mood; but Nora Kaye, Hugh Laing and Antony Tudor were in their usual fine form.

Eugene Loring's modern ballet, *Billy the Kid*, was revived and tried to recapture the Western atmosphere of pioneer days to a dry, brittle musical score by Aaron Copland. It was a laughable experience to see these dancers trying to ride imaginary horses to this jerky, uninspired orchestral score, and snickers came from many parts of the hall. The faults of "Billy" are legion, but two bright spots were the dancing of Michael Kidd, who took the lead, and of Janet Reed, a young American dancer with unusual talent, which she has been given opportunity to display on several occasions with this group.

Anton Dolin arranged the first presentation of the grand *pas de deux* from Tschaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite*, with Rosella Hightower stepping into Markova's shoes and covering herself with glory. André Eglevsky was her cavalier, and he excels in his turns and beats and is an artist of the good old Russian school. His combined effort with Miss Hightower was the high spot of the evening.

As a finale, *Bluebeard* was again given a disjointed performance, with only a few outstanding moments to its credit. Anton Dolin as Bluebeard, and Simon Semenoff as Popolini, are vital and humorous, and lend much support to this work. Maria Karnilova is one of the few better dancers still to remain, and her dancing is unusual. The music of Offenbach is assembled for this ballet, which was originated by Fokine.

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OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE. The return of Elsie Ferguson to the New York stage, after thirteen years of absence, is in itself enough to give a big uplift to the present season. Before she came we had only two new offerings that really heartened us. They were the Theatre Guild-Margaret Webster production of *Othello*, with Paul Robeson breaking records in the leading role, and Cheryl Crawford's production of *One Touch of Venus*, with Mary Martin as a new star.

Miss Ferguson's reappearance in the Rose Franken play, *Outrageous Fortune*, produced at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre by Miss Franken's husband, William Brown Meloney, made me recall the atmosphere on the opening night of *Oklahoma*. Different as the two offerings are, there was the same unusual cordiality between audience and players. The audience was in the highest mood of joyous expectation—enchanted by the return of the former star, appreciative of the splendid company engaged to support her, and quite sure that any play written by Miss Franken and acted by Miss Ferguson and such outstanding aids, would give it a wonderful evening.

In this expectation the audience was justified. Miss Franken has written better plays than *Outrageous Fortune*, and will write better ones in the future. But the present play is as interesting as it is uneven, and is acted to the hilt. Some of its human episodes have little to do with the development of the drama, but they are absorbing bits of theatre and they certainly help the characterizations.

I must admit that the character of Crystal Grainger left me cold, beautifully though Miss Ferguson played it. She is certainly no saintly visitor to the Harris household, as some of my confrères apparently imagined. Crystal, as Miss Franken shows her, is a woman of easy virtue, revealed by the lines of the play to have had many lovers. But she possesses the human sympathy, good humor and broad tolerance such women sometimes have. Finding herself a guest of a distraught family, in which most of the characters are in love with the wrong persons, she brings about certain readjustments. She does not untie all the tangles. No one could, for they are too numerous and confusing, but she unfastens some of them, notably those of her host and hostess.

Next to Miss Ferguson, in a company where every player is an artist, I would put Frederic Tozere as the poised Jewish head of the unhappy household, Maria Ouspenskaya as his aged mother, Margalo Gillmore as his distraught wife, in love with another man, and Brent Sargent as his abnormal younger brother. Sargent's work is especially brilliant in a company where all the acting is so good that it is hard to select the best. But I must not fail to include also that of Margaret Hamilton, as the temperamental wife of a Jewish doctor.

THE PETRIFIED FOREST. Mary Elizabeth Sherwood's adventure in presenting plays on the roof of the New Amsterdam Theatre began ambitiously with Robert E. Sherwood's success of years ago, *The Petrified Forest*. Most of us who then saw Leslie Howard in the leading role can never be satisfied with any other actor in that part. He was nothing short of superb. Unfortunately Miss Sherwood gave the part to an actor often good in other roles but lamentably bad in this one. Indeed, his stiff and artificial performance dragged down the entire play. Only E. G. Marshall as "Gramp" Maple, Barbara Joyce as the heroine, and John McQuade as the gangster were able to rise above his numbing effect on the rest of the company.

ELIZABETH JORDAN

## FILMS

**THE NORTH STAR.** The most distinguished thing about this newest Hollywood interpretation of Russia is its acting. From a long and capable cast, the characterizations of Walter Huston, Walter Brennan and Erich von Stroheim are certain to impress an audience. Once again American cinema-makers have seen fit to surround Russia with a sweetness and light that might truly prove amusing to the natives of that land, for some parts of the film almost take on the air of a musical. In contrast to this idyllic phase, the picture launches forth into a bloodcurdling reign of Nazi terror. Bombings precede the occupation of a village where atrocities pile up as attempts are made to indoctrinate the minds of the young with Nazi teachings. The culmination of these horrors is depicted by the bleeding of Russian children, resulting in death. In its efforts to put over propaganda, the picture has been too strenuous and so defeats its own purpose. On the moral score the offering is *objectionable* since it tends to present as ethically justifiable the deliberate killing of doctors, who are presumably guilty of murder, without any judicial process, and because in one sequence it appeals to the revenge motive. (R.K.O.-Goldwyn)

**OLD ACQUAINTANCE.** It is only in fiction that a childhood friendship could withstand the bitter tests of twenty years which are forced upon the heroine of this drama. Bette Davis is the long-suffering creature who puts up with the grotesque antics of Miriam Hopkins just because they remember things. Unfortunately, the audience does not share these memories and is inclined to loose patience with both characters. These two writers display different temperaments and tastes; they love the same man and they are sometimes jealous of each other's literary success. Still the finale finds them close because of those ties from the distant past. Miss Davis gives one of her sensitive, highly emotional interpretations, while Miss Hopkins overplays the unattractive role in which she is cast. Though moviegoers might forgive the implausible happenings because they are treated kindly by some capable actors, the picture must be rated *objectionable* since it reflects the acceptability of divorce as a solution and is marred by the inclusion of a suggestive sequence. (Warner)

**JEANNIE.** A most delightful story starring Barbara Mullen and Michael Redgrave has taken life in this unaffected British production. Much of the presentation's appeal must be credited to the skill and charm of the heroine. She lingers in one's memory as the Scottish lassie who decides to fulfil a lifetime ambition when her domineering father dies. Taking her inheritance of £300, she sets forth "to hear the Blue Danube played at its source"—in Vienna, the land of her dreams. Adventures both good and bad beset her trip, but the happy ending is always around the corner. *Adults* are guaranteed a very pleasant, refreshingly war-hysteria-free time when they see this modern-day fairy tale. (English Films, Inc.)

**THE DEER SLAYER.** James Fenimore Cooper's classic has not been treated very kindly on celluloid. It is only as a mediocre production that this tale of whites and Indians is recorded. There is action, but it is of such a stereotyped quality that it fails to satisfy. Though Indians replace the white villains of the routine Western, there is little else to distinguish it from the run-of-the-mill outdoor feature. Jean Parker and Bruce Kellogg have the leading roles. *Children* may find this more to their liking than their elders. (Republic)

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## PARADE

FOLLOWING the recent glorification of birth control by the *Reader's Digest*, Rev. Edgar Schmiedeler, O.S.B., sent to the publication a letter outlining the depravity of this unnatural vice. Wrote Father Schmiedeler: "It is no exaggeration to say that you are promoting a cause that threatens the whole Western World . . . . The *Digest*, instead of attempting to refute Father Schmiedeler's argumentation, merely placed after his letter a rehash of some polls taken among American women. According to these polls, a high percentage of Catholic women favor birth control.

In this connection, the experience and opinions of various authorities with respect to the accuracy of polls may be of interest. . . . An experiment made public at Columbia University some time ago showed that variations in the phrasing of the questions brought different answers from the individuals questioned. Five different results were obtained on the same issue from the same group by slight variations in the wording of the questions, a phenomenon that would seem to indicate the persons making up the questions can, if they wish, get pretty much whatever answers they desire. . . . Philip Guedalla, noted British historian, confesses he has no faith in these surveys of public opinion. Stigmatizing them as futile, Mr. Guedalla declares:

Before attaching the slightest importance to any diagnosis of public opinion based on a privately selected register of voters, I should want to be told at the top of each statement exactly how many voters were consulted. When I am told, for example, that sixty-two per cent support this view or that, I want to know sixty-two per cent of what?

Dr. Henry C. Link, famous psychologist, in a paper read before a meeting of the American Psychological Association, challenged the validity of public-opinion polls, asserting that the poll-taker could never be sure he was getting valid information. Many persons, Dr. Link declared, answer poll questions without knowing their own minds, despite which a gullible and eager public await poll results like heaven-sent manna. He cited a test in which 500 persons were asked what brand of tires they used on their automobiles. When the interviewers checked the tires actually used, they found the discrepancy to be so large that the question was abandoned. . . . In another test described by Dr. Link, 5,000 persons were asked: "Do you think the Government should do something to keep prices from going up?" Immediately after this, these same people were asked: "Do you think the Government should do something to keep wages and salaries from going up?" In answer to the first question, eighty-five per cent said yes and five per cent said no. But to the second question only twenty-seven per cent said yes and thirty-five per cent said no. Commented Dr. Link:

These opinions were obviously contradictory. Yet, in spite of such contradictions, issues of national and international importance are being discussed and decided with reference to poll results. Thus, the question of validity no longer is merely a scientific problem, but a public problem of major importance. Dr. Link believes these polls constitute a serious social danger because of "the readiness and even eagerness of many people to take them at their face value."

Last year, the best-known poll organization in the country, after a nation-wide poll, predicted the Democrats would gain a few seats in the House of Representatives. The inaccuracy of this poll was 100 per cent. Instead of gaining seats, the Democrats lost so many that the Republicans almost got control of the House.

JOHN A. TOOMEY

# CORRESPONDENCE

## FUTURE SKY PILOTS

**EDITOR:** Let me offer a supplementary thought in reference to the article of Francis X. Clark (*AMERICA*, Oct. 16). There is no doubt that there are airmen in our services today, flying the far-flung air routes of the world, who will desire to turn their vocation to the service of Christ after the war.

Greenville, Miss.

J. A. K.

## RETORT COURTEOUS

**EDITOR:** The scholarly, sober, objective and most charitable article, "The Church and Democracy," by Don Luigi Sturzo (*AMERICA*, Nov. 6) has taught me a lesson in humility. He had all the weapons whereby he might *brutally* slay his irritating adversary, but—*sine ira et studio*—Don Sturzo disposed of him effectively and decisively, but gently and with consummate grace. If Dr. Salvemini cannot see the light now after such a display of honest scholarship and Christian charity, may the grace of God consume and devour him!

Weston, Mass.

J. J. VALENTI, S.J.

## CALL TO LIBRARIANS

**EDITOR:** It is with no small satisfaction and hope that we have followed the recent correspondence in *AMERICA* in behalf of the *Science Counselor*. It is particularly heartening to note that a librarian is among the champions of this worthy cause. The *Science Counselor* was designed especially for the Catholic high-schools of the country and was regularly distributed to them and to the Catholic colleges as a quarterly between March, 1935, and March, 1943. This generous movement was initiated by Dr. Hugh C. Muldoon and was financed chiefly by Duquesne University. For lack of funds it now becomes necessary for these benefactors to the cause of Catholic education to suspend the publication of a magazine which has received worldwide recognition and applause.

That there is need of a magazine of this type is best proved by the fact that so many of those for whom it would have done a real service are apparently indifferent to or unaware of its benefits. Neither is it possible for us to appeal for its support directly to the teachers of natural science themselves, since the *Science Counselor* was for them the only unifying organ in this country. To the Catholic librarians, then, of all our Catholic institutions, we address a most earnest appeal for their worthy cooperation and support.

River Forest, Ill.

Sr. M. E. O'HANLON  
Department of Biology  
Rosary College

## SAINT FOR SOLDIERS

**EDITOR:** The nomination of Saint Martin of Tours as patron of soldiers and particularly of military Chaplains is exhilarating. It should be carried by acclamation. It is piquant, too. Just a little while ago Saint Martin was cited as a patron of conscientious objectors.

That claim rested on his renunciation of arms, which is related in the *Life*, written by his friend, Sulpicius Severus. The Emperor Julian had gathered his forces at Worms, so Sulpicius writes (chap. iv), for an imminent

engagement with the Germanic tribes invading France. His soldiers were called to him, one by one, on the eve of battle, to receive a customary gift. This was Martin's opportunity to execute a long pending resolution. He declined the gift, and announced that as a *miles Christi*, a soldier of Christ, he was not at liberty to fight. The Emperor was little impressed, and taxed him with cowardice. Martin countered by offering to meet the attack unarmed. Happily, before the test, the enemy sued for peace; "nor was it meet," says Sulpicius, "that Christ should accord to his soldier other victory than the bloodless conquest of the enemy, without the death of any one."

It is an admirable story. What of the pacifist interpretation? There is a much older one. In the eighth century, Egbert, Archbishop of York, issued various ordinances, including one on military service. It becomes good seculars, he declared, to fight for the flock of Christ, and spiritual men to be intercessors for all the people of God: "for the *miles Christi*, the soldier of Christ, ought not to use human weapons." As an example, he cites Martin, who said to the Emperor that "he was a *miles Christi*, and therefore could not fight" (*Mansi, Councils*, vol. XII, col. 430). This conception of the soldier of Christ as one consecrated in a peculiar sense to His service is as old as Saint Paul. (See II Timothy, ii, 3-4.) Egbert's interpretation of Saint Martin's case gathers full force from Sulpicius' repeated assertions that Martin before and during his sojourn in the army was dedicated to the religious state, "so that even then he was considered not a soldier but a monk." (Chap. ii.)

May I add a notable word about Saint Martin from an expert in hagiography, Hippolyte Delehaye. He is alluding to another passage of the *Life*:

"It is the figure of a hero these enthusiastic lines of Sulpicius Severus form for us, the man of a single, great thought, served by an indomitable energy; the man who lives only for God, and whose soul is adorned with every virtue. It is difficult to express better the ideal of Christian perfection." (*Sanctus*, Brussels, 1927, p. 239.)

Here is an ideal which every one of our soldiers and Chaplains might well strive to attain.

Ann Arbor, Mich.

EDGAR R. SMOTHERS, S.J.

## CORN BELT VS. TIGHT BELT

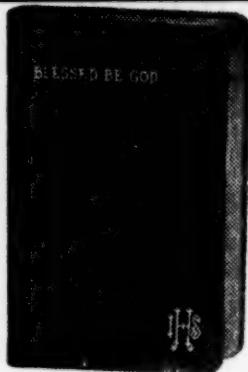
**EDITOR:** October 16 marked the publication of the Rural Life Number of *AMERICA*. It was a fine Catholic contribution to a too-often-neglected phase of our American life. I am a New Yorker and, after reading the various Rural Life articles, I went on a business trip through the Middle West. Throughout the trip a sentence from a rural-life article by J. T. White was always with me. Speaking of the plight of the farmer, Mr. White seemed to ask for a better understanding of the condition of the farmers, and for steps on the part of Washington to remedy conditions that make the lot of the farmer so difficult. Then he added: "There is an alternative, that the industrial East tighten its belt." That sentence has been bothering me ever since.

Has Mr. White lived in the "industrial East" since Pearl Harbor? I doubt it. Otherwise that sentence would never have been written. I've had to let my belt out two notches since I've been in Kansas, and I dread going back to the "industrial East" where, in these days, a man's belt just holds thin bones in place.

New York, N. Y.

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"Look not upon my sins, but upon the faith of Thy Church," we pray in the Mass. "We beseech Thee, O Lord, to accept this offering which we, Thy servants, together with Thy whole family make to Thee." As we bow our heads in the *Confiteor* at the beginning of the Mass, we admit our sins before the whole court of Heaven, but then we turn around and call upon the Blessed Mother and all the Saints "to pray for me to the Lord, our God." And they will and do. Just before the Consecration of the Mass, "we pray in union with" the Blessed Mother and all the Saints of heaven.

It is no private prayer, the offering of the Mass, no selfish prayer, no lonely little prayer. As we kneel at Mass this morning and every morning, we must realize that the Mass is not just the offering of the priest at the altar, at which we assist in any private way that pleases us. It is our offering, too. It is the offering of everyone present in the Church with us. It is the offering of the entire Catholic world, all united in this great Sacrifice. It is the offering of the whole Church, on earth, in Purgatory, in Heaven. It is Christ's offering for His Church and with His Church. It is the official offering to God of Christ and His Mystical Body by Christ and His Mystical Body.

And just as we do not offer Mass alone, we may not offer it for ourselves alone. In the words of the Offertory prayers, we offer it "for all here present and for all those living and dead who believe in Christ." We offer it "for our salvation and for that of the entire world." This does not mean that we should not have special intentions of our own. We should have, plenty of them; but at the same time, if we really wish to enter into the spirit of the Mass, we must offer it "for all the intentions for which Christ offered the Holy Sacrifice on Calvary." For it is one and the same Sacrifice.

Think just a moment on the full meaning of all this. If it is true that the whole Catholic world shares with us in the offering of our every Mass, it is equally true that we have the privilege of offering, ourselves, every Mass that is anywhere offered in the world at every moment of every day. The Mass is a never-ending sacrifice. Twenty-four hours of every day we can say with some priest at the altar, "*Offerimus tibi, Domine. . . . We offer Thee, O Lord.*" Twenty-four hours a day we can be offering Mass.

Twenty-four hours a day we know, too, that Mass is being offered for us, for our intentions. There is not a moment of any day of our lives when Christ and His "whole family" are not offering to God for us the most powerful of all prayers, the one perfect Sacrifice of the Cross. That certainly should give us strength and courage in the daily grind of life with its temptations and duties and struggles and sufferings. It should, too, inspire us to keep ourselves always spotless, always prepared to "go unto the altar of God," to offer to God "a sacrifice that is pure, a sacrifice that is holy, a sacrifice that is spotless, the Holy Bread of Eternal Life and the Chalice of Eternal Salvation."

It is all this we will think of when we see on the last day the "sign of the Son of Man in Heaven." If all our life we shall have been united in sacrifice and prayer with Christ and His Church, we shall be one with Him forever.

J. P. D.

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